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MINORITIES OF INDIAN-PAKISTANI ORIGIN
IN EASTERN AFRICA

EDITED BY
MICHEL ADAM

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INDIAN AFRICA

Minorities of Indian-Pakistani Origin in Eastern Africa

Edited by Michel Adam



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In memory of Cynthia Salvadori

Contents

Acknowledgements	vii
Initials and Acronyms	ix
Authors	xi
Note on Transliteration and Spelling of Indian Languages	xiii
Foreword on Bibliography and Methodology	xv
From the Trading-Post Indians to the Indian-Africans Michel ADAM	1
Panorama of Socio-Religious Communities Michel ADAM	69
East African Indians: How Many Are They? Laurent NOWIK	99
Family, Family Life and Marriage among Indian Communities in East Africa Michel ADAM	177
Nizarite Ismailis in Kenya Colette LE COUR GRANDMAISON	207

Bohras in East Africa: Orthodoxy and Reformism	
Nathalie GOMES	247
Merchants and Industrialists of Indo-Pakistani Origin in Kenya: A Sociological Overview	
Gidraph G. WAIRIRE.....	267
Living Apart Together: Economic and Spatial Logic of Indian Communities in Nakuru (Kenya)	
Barbara MOROVICH	293
Migrations and Identity of Indian-Pakistani Minorities in Uganda	
Godfrey B. ASIIMWE.....	317
The Minorities of Indian Origin in Tanzania	
Simeon MESAKI and Fatima G. BAPUMIA.....	351
“Indians are Exploiters and Africans Idlers!” Identity formation and socio-economic conditions in Tanzania	
Marie-Aude FOUÉRE	361
Indians and Others: Worlds Unknown to Each Other –Extracts of reports from the Kenyan press	
Michel ADAM.....	401
Portraits and Fragments of Life Histories in Kenya	
Michel ADAM.....	415
Glossary and Inventory of main places	433
Index	449

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Initials and Acronyms

AGOA	African Growth and Opportunity Act (cooperation agreement between the United States of America and about forty African countries)
AKDN	Aga Khan Development Network
AKFED	Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development
CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics (Kenya)
CCM	Chama Cha Mapinduzi (“Party of the Revolution”, the dominant political party in Tanzania)
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
DC	District Commissioner
FORD-Asili	Forum for the Restoration of Democracy-Asili (<i>asili</i> : “origin” in Swahili)
GK	Government of Kenya
HCK	Hindu Council of Kenya
IPS	Industrial Promotion Service (Aga Khan)
KAM	Kenya Association of Manufacturers
KANU	Kenya African National Union (majority political party in Kenya)
KENDA	Kenya National Democratic Alliance
KFP	Kenya Freedom Party (political party created by Indian-Kenyans in 1959 and absorbed by KANU in 1963)
NRI	Non Resident Indian
TANU	Tanganyika African National Union
TLP	Tanzania Labour Party
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics

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Note on Transliteration and Spelling of Indian Languages

The use of ethnonyms and terms expressing national identities or national origin

The Indian terms used in this book are either in Gujarati, the dominant vernacular language among members of the diaspora, or in Hindi and more rarely in Punjabi. Transliteration of Indian languages into English is only done for some of the Indian languages (Hindi), but remains dependent on English when there is no lexical translation.

Representatives of the Indian-Pakistani diaspora living in East Africa are locally referred to in English as “Asians”, a geographical adjective whose translation in French (“*asiatiques*”) creates confusion with people from the Far East. Had it been necessary, in an attempt to be specific, to identify immigrants by referring to their former or current citizenship, approximation and risks of confusion would have even been greater, this time leading to excessive divisions of cultural reality – particularly in the case, very common, where members of the same family are citizens of different countries.

Another certainly less satisfactory but easier way of referring to them was adopted in this book. Considering that a fraction of close to 90% of the current immigrants or their offspring originated from India, and also considering that a small fraction of those from present-day Pakistan left the subcontinent in large number prior to the 1947 disintegration, the editor of this collection chose to give preference to the toponymical and historical referents of “India” and “Indian” which, as identifying nouns or adjectives, relate to members of today’s diaspora. Besides,

similar terms or adjectives (*Muhindi/Wahindi*: Indian/Indians) are still commonly used in Swahili, the language spoken by most East Africans. However, whatever their particularities that are unique to countries that resulted from the 1947 split, it also appears that they all subscribe to a very old common cultural background. Therefore, it is not superfluous (and much less dishonourable) to refer to them using the adjective “Indian”. Depending on the context, we will consequently speak of “Indians”, people of “Indian” origin or the “Indian” diaspora, sometimes even Indian-Africans (notably Indian-Kenyans, Indian-Ugandans and Indian-Tanzanians) in reference to new cultural or political identities that qualify members of the diaspora and distinguish them from more recent immigrants whose roots in the country are less established. Reference to Pakistan will only be justifiable as far as it serves to specify demographic aspects that date back to the period before 1947. As to the term “Indian-Pakistanis” (as a noun or adjective), it will only apply exceptionally, either in an attempt to be more specific (as for example in the volume’s subtitle) or to refer to a category of contemporary immigrants whose geographical origin is uncertain. Finally, whereas the use of the word “diaspora” appears suitable for a population known for spreading across continents as one of its contemporary central features, the term “Overseas Indians”, associated with the “Non Resident Indian” (NRI) administrative status issued by the Indian union government, has not been adopted here due to the restrictive nature of this term, which implies keeping preferential ties with the metropolis.

Foreword on Bibliography and Methodology

There is significant English language literature dedicated to Indian immigration in East Africa, beginning from the ancient era of the Omani Arab trade posts to the end of the colonial period. Amongst the publications on Indian migrations in the Indian Ocean in general, it is worth mentioning: Kevalam M. Panikkar 1951, *India and the Indian Ocean*. London, George Allen and Unwin; Michael N. Pearson 1976, *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat. The Response to the Portuguese in the Sixteenth Century*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, California University Press; Norman R. Bennett 1978, *A History of the Arab State of Zanzibar*. London, Methuen; Peter Van der Veer (ed.) 1995, *Nation and Migration. The Politics of Space in the South Asian Diaspora*. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press ("South Asia Seminar Series"). On the history of relations between India and Africa and immigration in East Africa, see: Jagjit S. Mangat 1969, *A History of the Asians in East Africa (1886–1945)*. Oxford, Clarendon Press; Robert G. Gregory 1971, *India in East Africa: A History of Race Relations within the British Empire, 1890–1939*. Oxford, Clarendon Press. On Indian presence in East Africa, see: L.W. Hollingsworth 1960, *The Asians of East Africa*. London, Macmillan & St. Martin's Press; George Delf 1963, *Asians in East Africa*. London, Oxford University Press (political history); Dharam P. & Yash P. Ghai (eds) 1970 (1965), *Portrait of a Minority: Asians in East Africa*. Oxford, Oxford University Press; Robert G. Gregory 1993, *Quest for Equality. Asian Politics in East Africa, 1900–1967*. New Delhi, Orient Longman; Dana Seidenberg 1996, *Mercantile Adventurers. The World of East Africans Asians, 1750–1985*. New Delhi, Bangalore, New Age International

Publishers. Agehananda Bharati's 1972 publication, *The Asians in East Africa: Jayind and Uhuru*. Chicago, Nelson Hall Company, though not very recent, is a good synthesis on all immigrant communities by an Austrian ethnologist who converted to Hinduism. American sociologist Donald Rotchild's 1973 publication, *Racial Bargaining in Independent Kenya: A Study of Minorities and Decolonization*. London, Oxford University Press, is a rare study on the perception of Indians by Africans in Kenya during the years after independence. There are four major publications on post-colonial Uganda: S.H. Morris 1968, *The Indians in Uganda*. London, Weidenfelt & Nicolson; Michael Twaddle (ed.) 1975, *Expulsion of a Minority: Essays on Uganda Asians*. London, The Athlone Press; R.R. Ramchandani 1976, *Ugandan Asians: the End of an Enterprise*. Bombay, United Asia Publishers; Gérard Prunier 1990, *L'Ouganda et la question indienne*. Paris, Éditions Recherches sur les Civilisations. Five publications on colonial Kenya and the period before independence deserve to be mentioned: G.H. Mungeam 1966, *British Rule in Kenya, 1895–1912. The Establishment of Administration in the East African Protectorate*. Oxford, Clarendon Press; Richard T. McCormack 1971, *Asians in Kenya. Conflicts and Politics*. Brooklyn (N.Y.), Theo Gans' Sons; John M. Nazareth 1981, *Brown Man, Black Country*. New Delhi, Tidings Publications (testimony of a Goan lawyer practicing in Nairobi); Dana Seidenberg 1983, *Uhuru and the Kenya Indians*. New Delhi, Vikas; Zarina Patel 1997, *Challenge to Colonialism. The Struggle of Alibhai Mulla Jeevanjee for Equal Rights in Kenya*. Nairobi, Publishers Distribution Services, an apologist biography of an important figure of the diaspora. More recently, Cynthia Salvadori's 1989 (1983) publication entitled *Through Open Doors. A View of Asian Cultures in Kenya*. Nairobi, Kenway Publications, meticulously describes the cultural features of all immigrant communities (also by the same author, see: 1996, *We Came in Dhows*. Nairobi, Paperchase Kenya Ltd, 3 vol.). As well, *The Eastern Africa Journal of Historical and Social Sciences Research*, I(1)1991, published a special issue gathering an array of rather fervent diatribes dedicated to Kenya's Indian minorities. For the last five years, two publications are worth mentioning: the excellent doctoral dissertation by Helene Herzig, 2006, *South Asians in Kenya. Gender, Generation and Changing Identities in Diaspora*, Münster, Lit Verlag, devoted to the latest social and cultural changes in Kenya; and the very recent account by Neera Kapur-Dromson 2007, *From Thelum to Tana*. New Delhi, London, Penguin Books, telling the history of a family from Punjab that emigrated to Kenya at the very end of the 19th century.

Drawing upon considerable documentation, this book does not pretend to be an all-encompassing overview but rather aims at painting a broad picture of the communities of Indian origin in East Africa, striving to include changes that have occurred since the end of the 1980s, which correspond to the last years when sociological works addressed the Indian question.

We have to admit that this objective has not been entirely met. Amongst the three East African countries, Kenya, on the one hand, is more extensively covered than the two others. This focus on the former British dominion is not simply due to the demographical importance of the Indian minority there and its central role in the national economy. It also results from the concentration of research capacity in Nairobi, where the French Institute for Research in Africa that supported this publication is based.

Challenges in accessing and collecting demographic and economic figures, on the other hand, have been a constant and tremendous concern, making it difficult for authors to reach a satisfying level of precision. Studies had to be conducted with community organisations (Hindu Council, Aga Khan Jamatkhana, etc.) in order to make up for missing or incomplete official statistics (especially on the post-independence period). Even though such data collected amongst Indian representatives instances are not as precise as government statistics, they are nevertheless rather reliable; they capture the extreme mobility of Indo-African families as well as the frequent dispersion of their members, including at a regional level. Given that the studies conducted spanned a long period of time (from 2003 to 2008), it has not always been possible to proceed to the necessary update of statistics.

Let us finally underline that, in order to avoid too many frequent marginal notifications that would have impaired readability, all figures which appear in the text but are deprived of references were provided by community associations.

From the Trading-Post Indians to the Indian-Africans

Michel ADAM

Just like Southern Africa (South Africa, Mozambique, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe), the three countries of East Africa (Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania) have minorities from the Indian sub-continent amongst their population. Locally referred to as “Asians”, these people are essentially concentrated in the cities, particularly Nairobi, Dar es Salaam, Zanzibar, Mombasa, Kampala, but can also be found in smaller urban centres, and even in the remotest of rural townships. The East African Indians, whose main occupations are in business, manufacturing and the service industry and who make up a large proportion of the liberal professions, play a leading social and economic role, considering their number. Divided into multiple religious communities, but united in a mutual feeling of meta-cultural identity, their arrival in East Africa followed two demographically disproportionate migratory waves: the first one took place before the 20th century and mainly brought in island and coastal traders (Lamu, Zanzibar, Mombasa); the other, which was largely characterised by a wider social diversity (labourers, employed workers, technical workers, small-scale traders, etc.), resulted from European colonisation. Reaching a population of over 350,000 people in the beginning of the 1960s, the Indian diaspora went through great changes in terms of population growth, with a 100,000 decline towards the end of the 1970s and a contemporary rise of 150,000 (100,000 in Kenya, 40,000 to 50,000 in Tanzania and 10,000

in Uganda)¹. Resulting from xenophobic reactions, this demographic instability was also caused by identity insecurity. It explains difficulties for members of the diaspora to fit into the newly founded national entities. In addition, the relatively high population growth recorded from the 1980s should not conceal the fact that the ratio of this immigrant population to the entire population of the three countries shrank from about 1% in 1963 to 0.15% in 2007. In relation to the urban population, this decline is even more spectacular for Kenya alone, dropping from 18% in 1962 to 1.5% in 2001.

Brief background on immigration

Let us look at a map of the African continent. Whereas the continent's entire western coastline borders the immense part of the Atlantic Ocean, its eastern coastline borders an interior sea lined by countries that are endowed with commercial traditions: the Emirate coast, the southern part of Persia, India, which even shares its name with the eponymous ocean and has since ancient times dotted its shores with trading posts. Arabs, Persians, Indians and even adventurous traders from the Far East had already set foot on the eastern coast of Africa many centuries ago. Undoubtedly the Arabs were the forerunners, according to ancient testimonies, with some of their arrivals dating back to ancient history. After exploring the fertile islands off the coast, which were temperate and could easily be defended against all kinds of assailants, they established their slave trade colonies there. Five or six centuries before the Europeans created their "Sugar Islands" in the Caribbean, the Arabs had invented all the features of a socio-economic and social-cultural model, which, though less elaborate, was largely ahead of the West Indian establishments. The Indian Ocean islands of Lamu, Pemba, Zanzibar and Mafia, which produced sugar and spices in addition to being a gateway for slaves and slave trade goods, were under the influence of emirates that were transplanted from the Gulf. They became the crucible of a hybrid civilisation known as the *sahel* ("shore" in Arabic) country. The pronunciation of the word *sahel* was corrupted and later become *Swahili*. Like in the Caribbean (and later in the neighbouring Reunion and Mauritius islands), there emerged

(1) See the chapter written by Laurent Nowik in this book. The figure of 350,000 attributed to people of Indian origin could be broken down as follows on the eve of independence: Kenya: 176,500 (official figure) to about 200,000 (estimates by some authors); Tanzania: 90,000 (including Zanzibar: 13,000); Uganda: 75,000. These approximate figures do not include people who may have not been counted during census.

a Creole society (Arab, African and Muslim), which was oriental in nature and quickly became Islamised, with multiple dominant social strata of freed slaves and slaves. Equally, as with the Creole languages of the Caribbean region, a new language – Swahili, which combines Arab words and Bantu syntax – gained currency among the poor and became dominant in the entire society.

The early Indian traders quickly found their place in this urbanized and prosperous society that straddled the two continents. Using the Arabs intermediaries who were already present deep inland, they set up their first trading posts, introducing their import-export agents. Thus goods were exchanged in both Indian-Arab and Afro-Asian overseas trade: utensils, furniture, cloth, perfumes, arms and other manufactured goods against treasures from the African hinterland: gold, ivory, rhinoceros horns, dye (mangrove wood) and precious wood.

Almost all the Indian traders from East Africa were from the north-western part of the sub-continent, known to be the cradle of ancient and brilliant civilisations as well as the centre of intense economic activity: Sindh (today part of Pakistan), Gujarat, Punjab, and Maharashtra. This region was occupied four thousand years ago by Vedic invaders, and therefore the home, in some way, to primitive Hinduism. Since then, it has experienced diverse cultural influences (particularly Greek Buddhist, Christian and Muslim) and was the centre of the Turkish-Moguls who ruled India for centuries. The region was also the crucible of multi-religious efflorescence, some of which gave rise to India's great minority faiths: Reformed Islam (Ismailia and Bohra community), Parsism, Sikhism, break-away Hinduist faiths of Swaminarayan and Arya Samaj, etc. Located on the route between the Persian Gulf and the capital cities of the Great Moguls (Lahore and Delhi), Gujarat, in particular, has been since the end of the European Middle Ages one of the main industrial and trading centres of the peninsula. Situated at the edge of a vast cotton-producing region nicknamed the "Manchester of India" by the British, the Ahmedabad metropolis, the province's economic capital, was known for its wool, cotton and silk factories, its iron plants, and its goldsmith art (Goody 1999: 156). Often run by representatives of religious minorities, big commercial companies had already been practicing long distance trade for years, exporting to southern India and the Middle East and supplying royal palaces in Punjab and royal residences in Rajasthan and Sindh.

Between the western coast of India, the Persian Gulf, the Arab Peninsula and East Africa, the climate facilitated sea voyages. During

the monsoon called winter monsoon in the northern hemisphere (from October to March), the trade winds (*kaskazi*) blew from the northeast to the southeast, towards which it steered the ships coming from eastern coast of India, the Oman Sea and the Gulf of Aden. During the monsoon called summer monsoon (*kuzi*, from April to September), the wind would blow to the opposite (apath known as “Sabeen”). This change in soft and warm breeze was in marvellous tune with the type of ships used locally for centuries and whose origin can probably be traced back to Arabs or Persians². These ships, called *dhow*s in English, with a stern helm and a rigging gaffer known as “lateen” (with a triangular sail supported by an antenna), sailed with difficulty against the wind but gained high speeds with tail wind. Even before reaching the East African shores following the trade winds, the Arab dhows would sail freely along the counter trade winds up to the northern Indian ports, from Bombay to Gujarat. In India, ships similar to the type used by the Arab (*kotia*, *dhang*i, *boom*, *barig*, *manji*, *mota*) sailed along the winter monsoon in the Arab peninsula, from where they sailed along the Hadramaut coasts up to the Ormuz straits before sailing again further down towards Mogadishu, Lamu, Malindi, Mombasa, Pemba and Zanzibar (Jewell 1976). A dhow sailing in the opposite direction to this itinerary, initially leaving Gujarat in October, could, after reaching Madagascar, make a complete loop from April and sail via Comoros, Zanzibar, Mombasa and the Arab Peninsula (Blanchy 1995: 40-42).

The port towns of Mombasa and Zanzibar, which enjoyed robust protection from their Arab sovereigns, witnessed early arrivals of large colonies of Indian traders. Two religious communities from Gujarat were mainly represented in these towns: the Jains who broke away from Hinduism and are known for their experience in finance and overseas trade; and Ismailis who are Shia Muslims with Hinduist influence the Ismailis’ ancestors came from Persia and Syria and found refuge in India at the start of the 14th century. After resisting the misadventures of the Arab-Portuguese rivalry, the Mombasa Indians witnessed the building of Fort Jesus at the end of the 16th century; going by Portuguese accounts, it involved several thousand labourers from Gujarat and Malabar. For their part, the Zanzibari Indians, who initially restricted themselves to the import-export trade, credit and, apparently, to the slave trade,

(2) It is difficult to retrace whether the typical shape of dhows’ sails were the result of specific climatic conditions in the Indian Ocean or in use earlier to sail on the Mediterranean sea.

extended their influence on the local economy³. From 1840, while the Omani Arabs consolidated their power, Zanzibari Indians acquired many administrative responsibilities (customs, port authorities, state bank). In the early 1870s, numerous clove plantations changed hands in their favour and big Indian businesses enjoyed significant monopoly in the colony (Prunier 1998: 192)⁴. In 1875, there were more than 5,000 Indians in Zanzibar, mainly from the Ismaili community (2,725), Hindus (814) and the Shia Bohra community (543) (Salvadori 1989: 8).

As explained by Marie-Aude Fouéré further below, the Zanzibari Indians gained from British presence during the last decades of the 19th century but the cohabitation between Indians and Germans in former Tanganyika led to some frictions, as Indians endured rigorous strengthening of the apartheid system that the English had already established in Zanzibar. Nevertheless, the massive arrival of Indians in East Africa dates back to the beginning of British colonisation in Kenya and Uganda. It was a response to a deliberate imperial deployment plan between the Indian sub-continent, on the one hand, and Westerners opposing the African colonies, on the other.

The prospect of a long-term establishment of Great Britain in East Africa, which was strategically important in the Anglo-German and Anglo-French rivalry in the region, was also a source of economic and demographic interest. East Africa had great agricultural potentials under pleasant climatic conditions; and like South Africa, it offered vast expanses of sparsely populated land for the immigration of pioneer settlers. In the global organisation of British supremacy, the functional division of tasks and populations was the basis for the establishment of the grandiose imperial federation imagined by Cecil Rhodes, the audacious prime minister of the Cape colony. Even before the issue of European settlement arose, India was the best placed to play the auxiliary role of the United Kingdom in East Africa. Suffering from chronic over-population and having just previously experienced devastating famine, it offered – with the benefit of regaining its own social and demographic

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- (3) In spite of contradictory testimonies, the role of Indians in the slave trade, at least financially, has apparently been demonstrated up to 1860. However, the Jains probably managed to distance themselves from this trade (Mangat 1969: 7; Chrétien 1989: 183-184; Reclus 1888: 756-757). Indeed, there are communities of descendants of African slaves who became Hindus in north-western India and in south-eastern Pakistan called Sidi (Gujarat), Makarani or Habbish (Sindh) according to their regions. Several thousands of them took up military careers after serving initially as peasants under various maharajahs.
 - (4) Although the nominal ownership of clove plantations was retained by prominent Omani Arabs, most of them were auctioned in favour of Indian money lenders (see chapter by Marie-Aude Fouéré in this book).

balance – the resources for a docile and qualified emigrant population, which was in the then hierarchy of people positioned as superior to ethnic groups that were thinly spread out in the African bush.

“Settlers can be chosen from India’s over-populated provinces”, wrote in 1893 a British administrator in Uganda, “and that could be a relief to the concerned districts. They could provide us with labourers, artisans and *coolies*, as well as soldiers and policemen. In addition, the needs of these more civilized settlers ...could considerably boost import volumes while the result of their efforts would increase export volumes ...Moreover, their agricultural methods ... would sooner or later be imitated by Africans (Lugard 1893: 488-489, cited by Prunier 1990: 20).

From an administrative point of view, the first British protectorates in this part of the world were therefore mere extensions of the British Empire in the Indies. Whereas the Indian rupee became the undisputed legal tender, the core of the lower cadre civil service was staff from India, particularly Goans of Indian-Portuguese descent who were Catholics and multi-lingual. The British occupation army also consisted of Indian recruits, mostly Sikhs and Muslims from Punjab and Baluchistan. In Kenya and Uganda, regiments of Indian mercenaries took part between 1895 and 1899 in several military operations under British command⁵.

When the decision was made in 1895 to build the railway that linked the Indian Ocean coast and the Buganda protectorate, the company that won the construction concession (the Imperial British East Africa Company) charged several agents to recruit staff in India. They concentrated their search in northern, eastern and southern provinces: Baluchistan, Punjab, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Tamil Nadu (Madras)⁶. The English, having already been impressed by the quality of Punjabi labourers who participated decades earlier in the construction of the Indian rail network, thought they would not get better manpower anywhere else for the East African project. Among those considered in the beginning, there were also excellent geometers and technicians, specialists in bridge construction and other artisan skills (Kapila 2001: 1). Thus a majority of the 32,000 people who came from India and landed at the port of Mombasa were not simple *coolies* (Jain 1989: 45)⁷. Beside the qualified labourers (masons, carpenters,

(5) To mark the capture of Malindi in 1895 and during the conquest of Buganda between 1898 and 1899 (Prunier 1990: 20).

(6) One of these agents was Alibhai M. Jeevanjee, an important figure in the history of the Indian diaspora in Kenya. See chapter 13 in this book.

(7) Borrowed from “Kuli” after the name of an Indian tribe then considered primitive, the term *coolie* was actually avoided in the terms and conditions of the employment contract

copper smiths, mechanics, locomotive drivers, cooks, etc.), there were also a good numbers of artisans, as well as representatives of literate professions: geometricians and surveyors, telegraphists, writing staff, accountants, nurses, photographers, etc. Moreover, the contract workers were accompanied by an uncounted crowd of independent immigrants, attracted by prospects of benefiting from prosperous activities that would depend on salaried manpower remunerated at tariffs that were by far higher than those offered in India: assorted traders, tailors, barbers, musicians, acrobats, etc.

In addition to the perilous and difficult voyages from Indian ports to Mombasa, the contingent of immigrant contractual workers was subjected to treatment that was often harshly criticized. This underscored the toughness of the railway construction work, which the high number of patients and injuries as well as a high mortality rate clearly show. From August 1896 to December 1901, the completion date of the 931 kilometre line from Mombasa to Port Florence (Kisumu), 2,493 Indian workers, (about 10% of the staff directly employed in the construction project) died of illnesses or accidents (including 28 people eaten by lions). Close to 6,500 workers were involved in serious work-related accidents and were declared maimed (Kapila 2002: 3; A.A.H. 2000)⁸.

Following the completion of the railway construction, the majority of the contractual workers who survived returned in their country⁹. Contrary to a tenacious myth that is still recounted today among Indians and Africans, and contrary to the case of South Africa where a large section of citizens of Indian origin are daughters and sons of the first indentured labourers (or contractual workers) at the beginning of the 20th century (Landy 2003: 189), the contemporary Kenyan Indians are

as it was considered offensive (Kapila 2002: 2).

- (8) The three-year contracts signed with the railway company required workers to work for sixteen hours per day without any weekly leave. The workers were allowed to get married but not during working hours, which meant they had to marry at night. Moreover, the spouses had to live in a separate home. For every day of absence, the employer withheld an amount equivalent to wages for eleven and half days (A.A.H. 2000). For an anecdotal account of this episode in colonial history, see Miller (1971) and Patterson (1985[1907]).
- (9) According to an initial count, 6,724 people did not apply for repatriation (Ghai & Ghai 1965: 3). In reality this figure seems to have decreased to 2,227 after 1906 (Prunier 1990: 23). Some of these people were engaged by the railway administration whose staff (locomotive drivers and mechanics, conductors, switchmen, telegraphists, station masters, etc.) consisted of immigrants of Indian origin. After 1902, construction work towards Uganda continued at a slower pace. The railway line reached Jinja in 1910, but only reached Kampala in 1931. Meanwhile, the construction lines between Kenya and the Ugandan capital continued along the lakeshores.

not descendants of the hard labourers who were directly incentivised into expatriation by the colonial power¹⁰.

Soon after the return of the railway construction employees to India, the British administration, which was keen to rapidly develop the Kenyan protectorate and resumed its population plan developed ten years earlier, tried to encourage a small community of Indian farmers to settle, preferably along the railway line. Allotments of 30 hectares of land was offered to Patel farmers from Gujarat in Kibwezi, Makindu, Machakos, Limuru and Kisumu for growing maize, vegetables, sugar cane, and especially cotton, a delicate and difficult crop to grow, but for which the Indians had a long and solid experience. Their experience, however, had no future. Whereas the consolidation of the German presence diminished the ambitions of the British Empire in the region, the appeal of the Kenyan hinterland had in the meantime stirred up the appetite of emigration applicants in England. After predicting in 1901, in the words of the Ugandan high commissioner, that "East Africa would become America for the Hindus", the British administration opted in 1907 for the exclusive settlement of European settlers, confining the few remaining Indian farmers in the lowlands of the territory, before barring them from any access to ownership of farmland (Mungeam 1966: 103). From 1911 to 1920, a complete turn-around of the British colonial policies led to the break of administrative ties between Uganda, Kenya and India. Kenya, which became a colony of the crown in 1920, freed itself from the tutelage of Bombay, adopted the English shilling and replaced the highest ranking Indian civil servants with British officers from the motherland¹¹.

The scrapping of the vast Indian-African confederation scheme did not, however, hinder immigration from the sub-continent. Contractual incentives notwithstanding, Indian immigrants, on the contrary, continued to arrive as the years went by, as a result of individual initiatives maintained over the years through diverse family and neighbourhood networks. A number of these immigrants were business apprentices and other independent workers, who were keen to take advantage, just like the British, of development of the territory. As British historian Robert

(10) Indian historian R.R. Ramchandani recalls furthermore that despite the Indian Emigration Act (1883), 97.5% of the Indian emigrants left India without a contract (mentioned by Prunier 1990: 25).

(11) From 1911, the British administration put an end to the use of the Indian rupee and started removing civil servants from India. Whereas Delhi succeeded Calcutta in 1911 as the capital city of the empire of India, Bombay retained the administration of East Africa.

Gregory notes, Indians quickly understood while acquiring money (no matter how little) that Africans represented a vast market that the settlers ignored (Gregory 1993: 11). A little later, this market extended to the Europeans, then to the Indians themselves. Business, services, qualified artisanship, technical maintenance (in which Indians had remarkable expertise) were therefore the activities that the newcomers engaged in. Indians in Uganda, which was somewhat a remnant of the old Indian African colonization plan, also obtained permission to own farmland and engage in farming activities. This is how they were able from 1920, using rented or purchased land, to turn to cotton and sugar cane farming, either by renting or buying land. In 1935, cultivated land by Indians for sugar cane and cotton farming was, according to Gérard Prunier, nearly equal to the area under cultivation by Europeans: 21,306 acres compared to 22,564 acres (Prunier 1990: 41).

By the early days of the colony, the issue of the status of Indians had been presented to the two European governments – British and German – that had imposed their rule in the region. In the *Deutsch Ost-Afrika* colony, the tripartite system of apartheid established by the German administration (“Europeans”, “Natives”, “Indians”) was continued in 1918 by the British colonial power. Comparable systems of planned and controlled coexistence were imposed in Kenya and Uganda, though in the latter it was more informal because of the low number of foreign residents. In the Kenyan colony, Indians however had difficulties accepting a harsher discriminatory regime than in India and a regime that restricted their social upward mobility. Overturning the very conformist British East Africa Indian Association, which was founded in 1907 with the approval of the colonial authorities, Hindu youngsters founded the East African Indian National Congress in 1914. It served as a body for the defence of immigrant’s rights¹². While British colonial troops fought the German army along the *Deutsche Ost-Afrika* border, several leaders of this replica political party were accused of treason and arrested, tried and sentenced to death and finally deported to India¹³. For its part, the European population (3,175 people registered in Kenya in 1911) showed its concern over the massive influx of Indian immigrants. Between 1919 and 1923 it was engaged in a bitter conflict

(12) In the meantime, the Mombasa Indian Association was founded in 1906 under the leadership of a Bohra community personality, Alibhai Jeevanjee (already cited); it was even more critical in tone.

(13) In the Mombasa area, on the other hand, other people (including Brahman) also condemned to death were executed in Voi in 1914 (Kapur Dromson 2007: 115-116).

with the colonial administration, which was against the introduction of a quota system. In 1923, the British colonies department made a decision that favoured the interests of European settlers without meeting all their demands (Devonshire White Paper)¹⁴. It pledged to control Indian immigration. Managing to get more delegates to the colony's new Legislative Council – following elections demanded by the settlers – Indians did not obtain parity with Europeans as they had demanded. The ban on land acquisition was maintained, except in the urban areas¹⁵.

Census figures show that these immigration controls lacked efficiency, particularly in Kenya. From 11,787 in 1911, the Indian population rose to 25,253 in 1921 (Gregory 1993: 2). Instead of relatively stagnating (according to the wishes of the European minority), it went on to double regularly every ten years, reaching 176,613 in 1962, three times the number of European settlers (Nyaggah 1974: 215; Prunier 1998: 197; Nowik, *infra*)¹⁶.

As independence approached, the population of expatriated Indians in East Africa had original features that made it resemble in composition

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- (14) During this period, Indian political agitation resurged but without clear success. In 1921, Indian activists seeking to abolish discriminatory statutes attempted to close ranks with young Harry Thuku and other nationalist leaders of the Young Kikuyu Association (YKA). Harry Thuku's arrest in 1922 and the dissolution of YKA ended this initiative.
 - (15) The Kenya Legislative Council (abbreviated as LegCo), created in 1906, only comprised representatives nominated by the British governor, all of them Europeans in the beginning. In 1908, after protesting against this injustice – and enjoying the support of Winston Churchill, the then Colonies Secretary – Indians got one representative; the latter however refused to sit arguing that, as British subjects, members of his community had the right to equal representation with the Europeans. The Indian demands were rekindled in 1916 by Indian lawyer Manilal A. Desai, founder of *The East African Chronicle* newspaper, who was linked to influential Hindu and Indian-Muslim personalities such as Mamgal Dass, Alibhai M. Jeevanjee, or Suleiman Virjee. In 1919, *The East African Chronicle* allowed Harry Thuku, cited above, to write in its columns. Harry Thuku, the firebrand secretary of the Young Kikuyu Association, turned himself into the mouthpiece of Indian demands, and even sent a petition to London regarding this matter. After a number of adventures (marked by the threat of insurrection by settlers), the British colonies secretary who succeeded Churchill in 1922, Lord Devonshire, allowed Indians to have 5 elected members of the LegCo compared to 11 members representing Europeans whose population was nearly three times less. Arabs were gratified with a delegate. On the other hand, Africans only managed to get representation by a missionary. At the same time, Indians in Uganda also got a seat in the LegCo. Created in 1926, the Legislative Council of Tanganyika accepted three Indian representatives out of 23 seats. The Africans only accessed LegCo in 1945.
 - (16) The same *ratio* of 1 Indian to 3 Europeans remained during the entire colonial period (see the chapter by Laurent Nowik in this book). In Uganda, the Indian population rose from about 1,000 people in the beginning of the 20th century to 32,000 people in 1948 and 74,308 in 1969. In present-day Tanzania (first *Deutsche Ost-Afrika* then Tanganyika, excluding Zanzibar), the Indian population experienced a similar growth: 3,000 people in 1900; 9,000 in 1914, 10,000 in 1921, 46,000 in 1948; 88,500 in 1967 (according to Prunier 1990: 239-239 and Nowik, below).

the small Indian communities in Mozambique and Madagascar, but distinguished it from the large Indian diasporas in South Africa, Mauritius and Reunion Islands. Coming mostly from the northern regions of India, it consisted of sons and daughters of independent immigrants – especially businessmen and craftsmen; this distinguishes East African Indians from the Indians who settled in southern Africa and the Mascarenes, who were mostly descendants of “engaged” workers originating from southern and eastern India in the 19th century¹⁷. Although the population featured a dynamic occupational diversity – and in particular domestic staff and salaried employees in the colonial administrations – its dominant professional orientation placed them in some sort of continuity with the traders at the trade posts, whose presence in Africa dated back from centuries before.

From the beginning of the colonial period – and despite discrimination – the Indians developed rapidly and their material well-being improved a lot. With a great desire to succeed, striving to exercise strict discipline in savings and solidarity, and taking advantage of relative European powerlessness over their ambitions and the unfailing solidity of their family networks, those who were already well-educated and had received training in modern professions progressively imposed their expertise in areas that could have been mistaken to be an exclusive – if not reserved – European domain: lawyers, physicians, architects, geometers, consultant engineers, real estate agents. Having regained the positions occupied in the previous century by maritime trade post operators of the maritime counters, they established a near-monopoly of wholesale and import-export business and gained an increasingly firmer foothold in banking activities and industrial production. According to Kenya’s

(17) There are now about 850,000 people of Indian origin (68% of the population) on Mauritius island and about 200,000 (28% of the population) on Reunion island. Outside South Africa (which counts 1,150,000 Indians, 2.6% of the population), there has been a marked decrease in Indian populations over the last few years in other Indian diasporas in the Indian Ocean and southern African countries: between 15,000 and 20,000 in Madagascar, about 10,000 in Mozambique, a few thousand in Malawi (10,630 in 1961), Zambia (7,790 in 1961) and Zimbabwe (10,630 in 1961). In total, the Indian diaspora in eastern and southern Africa together with that in Madagascar and Mascarene could be estimated in 2008 at about 2,400,000 people. From the point of view of religious adherence, most of the Indians in South Africa are Hindus while most of the Indians in Madagascar are Muslim (*karan*), both Sunni and Shia, particularly the Bohra community. In the other southern African countries, Hindus are dominant. According to Prunier (1990: 247-254), they were 70% in 1961 in Southern Rhodesia (present-day Zimbabwe), 45.4% in Northern Rhodesia (present Zambia), and 37% in Nyasaland (present Malawi). As for the Muslims, they are mostly composed of Sunnis.

1962 census statistics, 65% of them were engaged in businesses or liberal professions, with only 5% holding unskilled jobs (GK 1966: 27)¹⁸.

Whereas the apartheid policy – which especially barred their access to all establishments of excellence frequented by the British (schools, clubs, restaurants) – kept them away from the European population, Indians also remained physically, socially and culturally separated from the African population. Barred in their majority from land and agricultural activities and concentrated in cities and towns (despite the very early presence of small Indian businesses in the most remote townships), where they came together in distinct districts, maintaining their own schools, temples, food businesses, hospitals and clubs, they developed in isolation, keeping their habits and way of life intact.

From the beginning of the 1930s, in the face of European ambivalence towards them, a number of Indian personalities seized, however, the opportunity to express their grievances, adding their voices to those of early African nationalist activists in demanding for equal political rights and an end to discrimination¹⁹. After the cooperation in Kenya with the Young Kikuyu Association championed by the ephemeral director of the *East African Chronicle*, Manilal Desai, other Indian personalities (Makham Singh, founder of Kenyan trade unionism, Haroon Ahmed, Pio Gama Pinto, Jaswan Singh, and Francesco de Souza) openly supported the independence movement, particularly defending Jomo Kenyatta²⁰. Though more lukewarm than in Kenya, there was similar

(18) Similar figures were reported in the Uganda colony (Dharan Ghai 1965: 84). See notably Nowik, below.

(19) Gérard Prunier explains the contradictions of the European position, convinced that the presence of Indians was useful but fearing they would claim too big a stake – and, in addition, also fearing the growing bid, against London's wish, to acquire some sort of autonomy for the colony, based upon the South African model. The idea of autonomy for the settlers was unsuccessfully revived in 1949 (Prunier 1998: 198-200). Agehananda Bharati ironically attempted to document the clichés conveyed by European settlers against Indians: "The Indians are sly and distrustful and have difficulty socializing with others; they are arrogant, cheats and thieves, they swindle their business partners; they are apprehensive, their houses are dirty, they are unbearably stingy, they lower the status of their neighbours due to their stinginess, even when they can afford the luxury; they practice family favouritism and monopolize business in favour of their relatives; it is impossible to trust them in business or other areas in general. They live below their means and consider that it is immoral to spend all their profits" (Bharati 1972: 170).

(20) The most famous of the radical Indians in the joint social struggle with Africans was Makham Singh, a Sikh who created the Labour Trade Union of East Africa in 1936, led the Mombasa dock workers' strike in 1939 and was condemned to ten years in jail by the British (Desai 1989). Still in Kenya, pro-independence Indians in 1959 formed the Kenya Freedom Party (KFP), allied to the Kenya National Party (led by Daniel arap Moi) which they were unable to join. The KFP merged with KANU in 1963 (Seidenberg 1983). Pio Gama Pinto was assassinated under unclear circumstances in 1963. Cynthia Salvadori

cooperation in Tanzania and Uganda, with the Asian Association declaring support for the Tanzanian National Union in 1960 and the Indian Muslim group backing the Uganda Action Group nationalists (Maharaj 2003: 111).

Such political commitment did not, however, get the explicit backing of the diaspora. Indeed, despite its arrogance and array of humiliations as well as its multiple restriction against status and class promotion, colonial rule did not present only disadvantage for the Indians²¹. Considering the social and cultural isolation of immigrants, and uncertainty over political future heralded by independence, the entrenching of the *status quo* under the British could guarantee coveted economic positions (particularly the near monopoly in certain activities) while maintaining at least some protection against possible retaliatory measures from Africans²².

There lies the explanation of the difficulties faced by Indians in the diaspora in the three East African countries following independence. Xenophobic reactions in Zanzibar (1964), in Kenya (1967) and in Uganda (1972) led to massive exodus of Indians. As an Indian author explains, the issue of citizenship was then at the centre of talks with African governments (Maharaj 2003: 119). Zanzibari Indians, who generally held British passports and lived separately from Africans, attracted popular opprobrium with their dual status as foreigners and social haves, likening them to the former Omani Arab masters²³. In Uganda and Kenya, Indians were granted a two-year ultimatum to take up the country's nationality – albeit as an option. Initially hesitant, the number of applicants for Ugandan identity increased sharply by the end of the grace period. The Ugandan nationalists accused them of

(1989: 341-342) presents a relatively exhaustive summary of activities against colonial rule in Kenya by Indian personalities or groups between 1906 and 1963.

(21) Refer especially to Ghai & Ghai (1965: 35-51).

(22) Gérard Prunier notes, in this respect, that the Indian personalities involved in the anti-colonial protests were engaged in the extreme left of the political equation and hardly represented the whole expatriate community (Prunier 1998: 199). Details on this period can be found in Seidenberg (1983: 129-162). Marie-Aude Fouéré notes in this book that Indians also shied away politically from African nationalists in Tanzania, see below.

(23) Class distinction within the Arab-Swahili society was strict between *waungwana* (aristocrats, who for most of them were descendants of the first Omani Arab occupants) and *washenzi* (illiterate people of African mainland origin who were often of slave descent). The 11-12 January 1964 coup d'état, known as the revolution, was backed by most of the *washenzi*; it led to the union between Zanzibar and Tanganyika, is said to have killed several thousands of Arabs, including Indians, who were considered their allies (the exact total number of the victims has never been established however). Almost all Indians left the island then, with only a handful later gradually returning to the islands.

opportunism, labelling them “paper citizens” (Maharaj 2003: 119). In Kenya, Jomo Kenyatta’s government took its nationalism a notch higher in the pretext of guaranteeing the development of its nationals. In November 1967, licences of non-Kenyan businessmen were cancelled. Although this measure did not lead to dramatic expulsions of almost the entire Indian population as seen five years later in Uganda, it led in the long run to the departure – which was in fact forced – of about 80,000 people, which was close to half of the immigrant population²⁴.

As explained by several contributors to this book (particularly Godfrey Asimwe on Uganda), the abrupt and, as a matter of fact somewhat unexpected, exile of a section of the population that played a leading role in business, services and partly in the production apparatus had profound damaging consequences on the national economies²⁵. The psychological repercussions and the political shockwaves of these measures were equally felt both in India and Europe, and even in some African capitals²⁶. Whether African States were driven by a chain of events (like in Uganda following the fall of Amin Dada) or they managed to reconsider their positions on their own contrition (like in Tanzania and Kenya), they adopted measures guaranteeing Indians restitution of their expropriated properties and actively giving them incentives to resume their activities. The case of Kenya is remarkable in this respect. The Indian population, which fell to 78,000 in 1979 and further declined following the 1982 xenophobic riots, rose once again to stabilize at around 100,000, half of whom acquired Kenyan nationality (see chapter by Laurent Nowik in this book)²⁷. This demographic resurgence, apart

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- (24) There were two sets of measures which, contrary to what had been announced, were only applied after a two-year ultimatum: the Immigration Act obliged non-citizens to obtain a work permit and the Trade Licensing Act restricted engaging in business to Kenyan citizens, except in certain districts in the cities. These provisions elicited such bitter protests that, according to an MP of Goan origin, Fitz de Souza, by the end of the ultimatum issued to obtain naturalization (12 December 1965), 12,000 applications from people of Indian origin had not yet been reviewed by the Kenyan authorities (Warah 1998: 33). Within a period of one year and a half, between November 1967 and March 1969, more than 20,000 undoubtedly left. More people continued to leave, albeit to a lesser extent, up to the mid-1980s.
 - (25) In 1962, businesses belonging to Indian immigrants contributed 73.6% to the tax revenue of the Uganda colony (Prunier 1990: 85-86).
 - (26) The arrival of train loaded with tens of thousands of Indian-Ugandan refugees to the Nairobi central station gripped the attention of the public in India and Europe. The expulsion elicited harsh condemnation from Presidents Nyerere of Tanzania and Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, but did not draw any protests from other African countries, including Kenya.
 - (27) The percentage of Indians having Kenyan citizenship, which was estimated at 59.35% in the 1989 census, fell in 1999, according to Laurent Nowik (below), probably because the

from being the probable result of pressure that was brought to bear on Kenya by international donors, also came about because of favourable treatment of Indians by President Daniel arap Moi, who got into a tactical alliance with the Indian high society to check the increasing financial influence of the emerging Kikuyu middle class. Thus in 1986 a section of businessmen who were dispossessed in 1967 turned to manufacturing by purchasing various multinational subsidiaries that had set up in Kenya at the beginning of the 1960s and had been liquidated by their owners because of unfavourable politics in Africa (Prunier 1998: 204)²⁸. Unscrupulous wheeler-dealers also took advantage of the new Kenyan government's magnanimity towards Indian economic interests to engage in financial fraud, setting in motion reverberating scandals. The events of the recent past seriously dented the reputation of the entire Indian community in East Africa²⁹.

Population overview: mobility and identities

The population of East Africans of Indian origin, estimated at about 150,000 as mentioned above (two thirds of them living in Kenya), now consists of about 60% national citizens (probably a lot more for Tanzania and quite distinctly less for Uganda), while the rest of the population are either citizens of India (between 10 and 40%), of Pakistan (2 to 3%) or citizens of Western countries (especially the United Kingdom). The population of the Indian-Pakistani diaspora more than halved in the past half century, owing this resurgence in numbers in part to fresh immigrants. This resurgence, which was unequal depending on the country – and proportional in a way to the numerical weight of the massive departures that characterized the ten years that followed independence – mostly affected Uganda (where a majority of the expelled vowed not to return), then Kenya, and to a lesser degree

rise in figures of naturalized Indians was not high enough to compensate the marked increase of the number of freshly-arrived clandestine immigrants.

- (28) These speculators made it a point to get back their former businesses a little later from the heavily indebted African buyers.
- (29) For details on these businesses (particularly in Kenya), see Prunier (1998: 204-207), Otenyo (1998: 276-282) and Grignon (1998a: 334-336). In Tanzania, the Indians went along without too much damage with the political developments set in motion from 1967 by President Julius Nyerere. After the nationalization measures that in 1967 affected all the banking institutions, the main industries and most of the land other than that meant for residences of their owners, the Ismaili community made joint venture proposals to the Tanzanian government. With their population almost halved (about 45,000 in 2006 compared to 88,500 in 1967), the situation of Indian-Tanzanians more or less stabilized. It is worth noting that a very large majority of Indians resident in Tanzania now have Tanzanian citizenship.

Tanzania, with the exception of Zanzibar. This influx of immigrants, who were apparently remotely related to previously well-established residents, proved difficult to classify both by demographic composition (*sex ratio*, marital status, age, profession, etc.) and by origin (on the basis of which part of the Indian subcontinent or other “primary” immigration countries they came from exactly).

In addition to the influx – which is becoming less and less significant – of engaged spouses from India by families, a third type of “modern” immigrant has emerged over the last few years. This recent wave is mostly made of single young graduates belonging to the Indian middle class who are exposed to unemployment in their regions of origin, apparently following affirmative action to promote the low castes (*scheduled castes*). With high qualifications (particularly in data processing and information technology, technical business and management), these expatriate candidates come to somehow “replace” young African Indians elites who themselves are expatriates in the West. They work in manufacturing, banking, import-export and international hotel industry. Less demanding in terms of salary and often shunned by many African Indians, they are unwelcome by most Africans. As will be demonstrated a little further, economic rather than cultural reasons constitute a compelling argument in explaining the Indian employers’ preference for them. Nicknamed “rockets”, their detractors say their ultimate objective is to attain an international career, preferably in a Western country. Their demographic volume is as difficult to estimate as the number of these young workers in irregular status or the number of those of them who obtained residence status through corrupt practices³⁰.

Like in any situation of constant immigration, the accumulation of several migration “waves” in East Africa gave rise to a socio-historic stratification between “old families” going back several generations of existence in Africa, and neo-migrants born abroad (often in India) with no roots in the host country. As Godfrey Asimwe notes in the case of Uganda, even though relations with the African population are not

(30) Having been issued with tourism visas, the immigrants were granted residence and work permits, as well as passports through underhand means. While pointing out the high number Indian travellers who cross the East African borders with tourism visas (particularly in Uganda), Laurent Nowik (below) underscores how much it is almost incomprehensible that these visa holders, who could as well be “rockets” or even young “engaged” spouses, are authentic Indian tourists paying a visit to their emigrant family, or even Indian-Africans who have kept their Indian passport. It is equally almost impossible to appreciate the future prospects of the fresh immigrants, since not all of them are willing, nor do they have the means, to extend their migration to Western countries.

always advantageous for the Creole families, cultural conflict between the latter and the neo-migrants arises in each of the three immigration countries: on the one hand, assimilation, even superficially, of the rudiments of African culture (knowledge of the practices, mastery of the Swahili language, etc.), and on the other, ignorance about Africa, more avid adherence to religion, little attachment to certain ancestral traditions, etc.

As a consequence of the recent contribution of immigrants from the last two waves (and characteristic of constantly reconstituting diasporas), the immigrant Indian population in Africa is dominantly young and presents an even more marked sex ratio imbalance (about 110 men to 100 women), particularly in Uganda, a country that experienced an almost complete overhaul of the Indian settler population following the 1972 expulsions³¹. The bulk of the Indian-Africans, who until recently remained alien to farming, are concentrated in cities (about 85% in Kenya and Uganda, and an unknown percentage, but probably the same, in Tanzania)³². This disproportionate population distribution in favour of important urban centres should not conceal the fact that, in certain declining ratios compared to the previous situation, representatives of the diaspora are also present in almost all smaller urban centres as small-scale traders (*dukawallahs*) and sometimes in the simple rural townships as previously mentioned³³. Going hand in hand with carrying out all kinds of trade activities (selling imported and locally manufactured products, buying agricultural products, micro-credit), this spreading out thus creates contact between a section of the immigrant community and urban or rural African populations.

A final demographic characteristic of Indian populations is their extreme geographical mobility, generally associated with families scattering both within East Africa and at a transcontinental level, from the Middle East to Britain, from North America to Australia. Their life

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- (31) Average age in Kenya (1999): 30.5 years; 60 years old and above accounted for: 8.6%; average age in Uganda (2001): 27.6 years; 60 years old and above accounted for: 3.4%; average age in France (2008): 39.9 years; 60 years old and above accounted for: 21.8% (data provided by Laurent Nowik).
- (32) Laurent Nowik mentions further below the following percentages: in Kenya, 75% of the diaspora are concentrated in Nairobi and Mombasa while in Uganda, 69%, are resident in "greater" Kampala.
- (33) Thus the current concentration of Indians in Kampala (69%) as highlighted by Laurent Nowik contrasts sharply with the situation that prevailed in the post-independence period when only 42.5% of the Indians resided in Kampala compared to 57.5% in other parts of the country, out of which 33% were settled in the eastern provinces (calculated from figures provided by Prunier 1990: 230).

histories show that few families did not have some individuals or groups of individuals who moved residence several times in the last century, often simultaneously associated with a change of state or profession. A frequent characteristic of the emigrant populations is the propensity to repeatedly move at the end of the initial migration and quickly exhibit a sign of dissatisfaction while at the same time showing the capacity to cope with it by migrating afresh. It also shows the capacity of reinvention occasioned by the geographical explosion of families, thereby reducing to nothing – or at least severely weakening – the claim of being native frequently displayed in Africa by people of Indian origin. If it is true that the redeployment in space of family networks is undoubtedly a multidimensional factor for personal reinvention – or “re-packaging” of the self (whether professional, linguistic, cultural, etc.) – within Africa; this does not bring into question, to those concerned, the self-definition of cultural identities, as the collective desire to define themselves today on a larger scale than before bears witness to: “African Indians” rather than “Indian-Kenyan”, “Indian-Ugandan” or “Indian-Tanzanian”. For young members of the Indian diaspora, the transnational character of such new collective identities is not conceived as detrimental to their integration; on the contrary, as will be seen a little later in this book, they consider it as an asset which African states involved in the globalization process can benefit from, seeing that they are somehow a vanguard group of globalization on the African continent.

General characteristics of the Indian diaspora in East Africa

Even though most of them are from only one region of the subcontinent (south-eastern Pakistan, north-western and western India), the immigrants in East Africa form a miniature society in each of the countries they have settled, evoking a sense of “miniature India”. With some specific exceptions (particularly the “untouchables”), all the classes and religious communities in existence on the Indian subcontinent are represented in East Africa, albeit in proportions that do not reflect the situation in the former motherland. While Muslims – and, within the group of Muslims, Shia – have a higher population ratio in East Africa than in India (35 to 45% for Muslims, depending on the country, compared to 14% in India; and 46% for Shia in East Africa compared to 15% in India), people of the middle and lower middle class – corresponding to the Hindu class category of *Vaishya* – are slightly over-represented. As will later be evident, belonging to these

categories cannot be established with any certainty³⁴. Within the group locally known as “Hindus”, the ratio of the schismatic and break-away organizations (Jains, Sikhs, etc.) is abnormally high, often more than a third of the total number compared to 7% in India³⁵.

Table 1.1 Indian population distribution in Kenya by community of origin

	1931		1948		1962	1999**	
Hindus	19,748	(45.3%)	51,395	(52.6%)	97,841	(55.4%)	56%
Muslims*	15,006	(34.4%)	27,585	(28.2%)	40,057	(22.7%)	35.8%
Sikhs	4,427	(10.1%)	10,621	(10.9%)	21,169	(12%)	6.6%
Christians	4,131	(9.5%)	7,613	(7.8%)	16,524	(9.3%)	1.6%
Others	311	(0.7%)	473	(0.5%)	1,022	(0.6%)	

Source: Ominde (1984: 35) and the author's estimates

*While the ratio of Hindus gradually increased, the ratio of Muslims decreased up to 1962 before rising once again.

** Author's estimates

Table 1.2 Ratio of breakaway and schismatic religious groups in Kenya compared to the Indian Hindu population (2001)

	Kenya		India
Jains	16,000	(21.5%)	0.7%
Sikhs	8,000	(10.7%)	2.0%
(Swaminarayan, Arya Samaj, etc.)	2,000	(2.8%)	4.3%
Total	4,131	35 %	7%

Source: Author's study

- (34) It is known that Muslims make up 97% of the population in Pakistan (77% Sunni, 20% Shia, 3% Hindus and Christians). But the ratio of immigrants in East Africa with roots in today's Pakistan is very low (between 2 and 10% depending on the country). In East Africa, the proportion of Muslims is considerably higher in Tanzania (about 40%) and lower in Uganda (20 to 30% according to the estimates). As shown by the table above, the ratio of Muslims has risen progressively in Kenya since independence.
- (35) In Kenya, the Jains and the Sikhs in 2002 were respectively 21.5% and 10.7% of the total number of Hindus instead of 0.3% and 2% in India. Among the explanations attributed to the low proportion of orthodox Hindus in East Africa are the Manu laws that bars them from crossing the seas (*Kala Pani*: “black water” or “black sea”) for fear of pollution upon contact with non-Hindu populations that do not observe the purity prescriptions - the violation of this rule could lead to expulsion from one's caste and reincarnation into a lower one. Apparently the over-representation of religious minorities among Indians overseas – as well as among the Muslim – was in reality due to other reasons that will be explained Below.

As the chapter examining this issue explains in detail later on, the Indian-Africans are organized in about hundred communities, which are themselves linked in communal federations according to the three criteria of religion, region of origin and socio-professional class. The third criterion, which is less explicit but often perceptible among the Hindu breakaway groups and the non-Hindu groups (including Muslims and Christians), is a systematic feature among the orthodox Hindus in the classic form of belonging to one of the class orders (*varna* or “colour”) and more explicitly affiliation to a caste (*jati*). According to the distinctions required by the Manu laws, there are, as it is commonly known, four *varna* in the symbolic panorama according to which the Hindu society is stratified: *Brahmans* (priests), *Kshatriya* (warriors, holders of political power), *Vaishya* (farmers, craftsmen, businessmen) and *Sudra* (servants). As has just been noted, the *varna*, which are never explicit, are very rarely mentioned and sometimes are even unknown to the individuals who make them up – except notably for the Brahmans and *Kshatriya* (more frequently referred to in this collection as *Rajput*), are in turn divided into a multitude of castes³⁶. Formally abolished in India in 1950, the castes did not disappear from the symbolic landscape that defines the subcontinent: from Pakistan to Bangladesh, from Nepal to Sri Lanka. Nominally present in East Africa in the form of communities as already mentioned, the castes – called *gnati* in Gujarati – as we will see, which stopped carrying out their magisterial duty of professional registration, however retain, at least partially, their social and symbolic importance. In India there are still two class categories called “out *varna*” that are not represented in Africa: the “untouchables” (known as *harijan* or *dalit*, a category that has its own castes) and the aborigines (*tribes* or *adivasi*), a designation that applies to animist minorities living away from the large religious majorities.

African Indians – Minorities without concessions?

The East African Indians - a population that was classified, as mentioned earlier, in a professional and socioeconomic position between Europeans and Africans, and occupied jobs and carried out service functions in communication, surveillance, subordinate command, trade or specialized production - were also accorded an intermediate status during colonial rule. As subjects of the crown, they were not subjected to

(36) In 1953, the Indian government census showed that there were 2,399 *jati*, but their number is in reality much higher. *Rajput* initially referred to Rajasthan inhabitants who consisted of a relatively high ratio of Kshatriyas.

the work permit (*kipande*) system at the same level as some Africans – like Kenyans in the Native Reserves. However, since they were deprived of some of the rights associated with British citizenship, they were socially in a subordinate position. The apartheid system imposed on them narrowly limited their social development, barring their access (by law or as a matter of fact) to places frequented by Europeans (schools, hospitals, clubs and sports circles, restaurants, hotels, etc.) and closing them up in a rigid setting, thus restricting their socialization. Within the colonial context, the Indian community, including castes and religions – while maintaining its internal social and class hierarchy – thus found itself in a position equivalent to that of intermediate castes in India, with the British (or Germans during the *Deutsch Ost-Afrika* rule) occupying the top of the hierarchy. Barred from accessing the high-ranking positions of responsibility and power and necessarily subjugated, both socially and ethnically, to the imperial leash, Indians in general dominated the large mass of the Africans but were unable to exercise tutelage over them.

This analogy with traditional India – where the castes cohabit within a system of hierarchy but do not always impose their power over each other, except in the two extremes of the social spectrum – undoubtedly contributed to having Indians in East Africa accept the colonial interlude without protesting too much, even though – as mentioned earlier – an active minority resolutely supported the independence movement. Following independence, the legal framework behind the community system was abolished. At the same time egalitarian and democratic principles were put in place: equality between all citizens in enjoying rights and freedoms, creation of a single public education system, universal suffrage, free access for all citizens – in consideration of their merits alone – to all professional and political positions, ban on division of labour along ethnic and community lines, etc.

Asked to choose between leaving and being incorporated into the new society and politics, the majority of the Indians opted for a middle ground, choosing to settle in the country but rejecting complete integration in accordance with the wishes of the new authorities. Keen not to jeopardise the sectors considered vital for the country's prosperity, the East African governments accepted this compromise. Although in several cases it was poorly managed at the expense of the immigrant communities (particularly in Zanzibar and Uganda), the newly created order has persisted to this day. Its features can be described as follows:

1. Desire to retain and affirm cultures of origin,
2. Partial continuation of community and class division of labour,
3. Maintaining retention of community auto-segregation,
4. Low social and political participation,
5. Contradictory relations with India,

Desire to retain and affirm cultures of origin

The African Indian's micro-cultures encompass a set of practices, norms, and representations that are a direct product of the society of origin, and have been kept and reproduced for close to a century. This is the case particularly in language, type of food, etiquette, body aesthetics, family organisation, education system and norms, religious beliefs, etc. Although some of these cultural ingredients are undoubtedly unique to every religious or regional community, many are shared by the entire diaspora (we will revisit this point that has already been tackled and discussed above).

It is well known that the elements of micro-culture, as shown by the Indian case, are likely to change with time, not only because of their own dynamics, but equally due to cultural contact. The porosity of every culture therefore indicates its capacity to ingest the external contributions. Two observations can be made in this respect:

1. The extraordinary labyrinth of religious, socio-professional and regional ramifications (more than one hundred and fifty distinct associations in the whole of East Africa) is indicative of the desire by the immigrant Indians to keep intact the own community's socio-cultural identity, whatever the dynamics of its internal transformation. Even though this multitude is appropriate for the situation in the diaspora (where the ties of solidarity are expressed more intensely in smaller circles of the in-group), it reveals the fact that some dynamism of segmentation that is typical of all religious groups in India has been maintained in East Africa.
2. It is remarkable that although settled in a massively African environment, the Indo-African cultures seem to have hardly been affected, but instead have borrowed from the West, particularly Anglo-Saxon. However, there are many examples of borrowings

from Indian cultures by African cultures: linguistics; technical and architectural; culinary and dietary, etc.³⁷

The relentlessness of Indian communities in their desire to keep their original cultural matrix alive and unaltered – by way of massive translocation outside their borders – reveals a paradox that goes contrary to the thinking of proponents of vernacular authenticity. Whereas there hardly exists a religion that can be more identifiable with a region as Hinduism, the very existence of the diaspora – and more so its perpetuation as well as its indefinite spread throughout the world – makes Hinduism explode externally. This deprived it – in a similar manner as the other Indian religions that have been greatly influenced by Hinduism – of its primary authenticity. This issue, which we will revisit, is at the heart of debates on African Indian identities, on their contemporary metamorphoses and how they entrench themselves – still in a conditional or an incomplete manner – in the dominant cultural and political contexts of their host countries.

While first ignoring the theme of internal transformations that are unique to each of the cultures that characterise communities of Indian origin, we will briefly mention in this book the case of religion, language, diet, clothing and ornamental practices, as well as social and family organization.

- a) In East Africa there are hundreds of mosques and temples for various congregations of immigrant Indian minorities. Some of them are conspicuous and majestic, occupying central locations in the three capitals of the region (especially in Kampala and Nairobi) while some are more modest, sometimes tucked away in the backyards or discovered by chance at the edge of a small urban township, like the minuscule charming mosques – often miniature replicas of huge monuments in Punjab – that are spread in rural parts of Kenya's Central Province. Cast in stone and deeply rooted in the soil, the Indian diaspora's religious presence is as affirmed as it is displayed in a traditional African universe that lacks cultural edifices, and rivals Christian religious monuments (this is the

(37) Africans use linguistic borrowing often unknowingly. Here we list only a few borrowed words: *harambee* (from Hari Amba: a Hindu divinity invoked by railway workers); *mama kali* (from Kali: goddess personifying evil); *debe* (unit of measure of about 4 gallons or 16 litres widely used in the Kenyan rural areas and derived from *dubba*, a can made of metal used in northern India for transporting drinking water); *landhi* (rustic house built of wood and iron sheets). There are borrowed words from Indian languages into Swahili. Neera Kapur Dromson gives some examples in her article (2008: 288 and *passim*).

scenario in Mombasa and Dar es Salaam) and even contrasts with the latter's relative discretion (in most provincial towns). In all of the cases, it symbolises the visible and lasting nature of Indian presence in the region, at times acquiring some sort of telluric legitimacy, halfway between the (very African) chthonian deities and the marine world that connects them with the world of the origins. Such is the case in Mombasa where there has been for nearly a century a curious Hindu temple built inside a sea cave whose floor is submerged by water when the tide is high. Against a natural, dark and a little troubling science-fiction backdrop, something resembling a statue sculpted by backwash erosion, covered by algae and shellfish and decorated by the faithful, with cloth faded by the sea sprays, make up the figurines of a primary cult (cow, elephant, turtle, etc.)³⁸. Nothing is less African than this theatre of wild nature, which seems to have existed since time immemorial.

- b) All Indian-Africans are multilingual. All speak the language of their region of origin (Gujarati, Punjabi, Urdu, etc.) – except Goans³⁹. This is the language used within the family and for intra-community communication. Through various means (television, community organisations), the learning of Hindi, one of the official languages in India, is widespread and enables the immigrants to maintain cultural contact with their motherland. With the exception of recent immigrants, the Indian-Africans are also fluent in Swahili, the language of communication in Tanzania and Kenya used in everyday interactions with Africans, especially in professional settings. In smaller towns, Indians occasionally speak an African vernacular language (for example Kikuyu in Nyeri town or Kimeru in Meru, just to mention a few examples known to the author)⁴⁰. But this acceptance of African languages does not come

(38) In the strict sense of the word, there is no "origin" or "creation" of the world in Hindu mythology. On the other hand, one may talk of "original personalities". In Vishnu's second of the 10 reincarnations, the sea turtle plunges into the ocean after the great floods to take possession of the "immortality liqueur".

(39) As mentioned in the foreword, Gujarati is the most widespread regional language. Similar to Gujarati, Cutchi is spoken particularly by small minorities of Cutchi Patel (Hindu) and Cutchi Sunni (Sunni Muslims) who come from the border districts of present-day Pakistan. Cutchi is a mixture of Sindhi and Gujarati; morphologically it is not very distinct from Gujarati, but it is phonetically close to Sindhi.

(40) A study carried out in 1988 among Sikh women in Nairobi indicates that 51% of the sample studied spoke at least four languages fluently (11.5% spoke at least five languages), with the percentage of those who spoke only two languages not exceeding 13.1% (Gurwitz 1988: 114).

with any symbolic, aesthetic, literary or emotional penetration and seems confined to functional use. The language of inter-community communication is English. Moreover, its use currently tends to go beyond communication between various vernacular groups. Used as elsewhere as the language of social development, English is becoming the internal communication language among some Ismaili communities as well as within a number of families that have embraced modernity, especially the youth, notably among those who often travel abroad⁴¹.

- c) The attachment of people of Indian origin to their dietary practices captures the attention of all observers. Whereas African diets (which generally have little variety) have quickly changed in composition or lost their exclusive nature following their contact with Western societies, the great Indian cuisine and its daily modes of consumption have only undergone slight changes. Largely inherited from the northern India's Moghul traditions, the cuisine is not connected to any community in particular, but has emerged from regional traditions. Its reference community notwithstanding, it particularly has a range of vegetarian recipes with multiple olfactory and taste variations, with the vegetarian diet extensively spread to include even Muslims⁴². The meticulous respect for and near obsession with quality and the origin of the ingredients, the exact wording of the recipes, the order of the dishes, the table protocol and aesthetics, the ritual precautions taken in its arrangement owe less their adherence to routine

(41) In Kenya, the use of Indian languages is encouraged among the youth through several FM radios and a private television channel. A subsidiary of KBC (Kenya Broadcasting Corporation), East FM Radio represents all the communities. It broadcasts in English and Hindi, and employs many "rockets" considered to speak Hindi more fluently. Run by Hindu Lohana and financed through airline advertisements by Indian-Kenyan businesses, Sound Asia Radio broadcasts music programmes, interviews with Indian leaders as well as general news in English, Gujarati and Hindi. These two radios are totally politically neutral. Owned by the Ismaili community, Nation TV broadcasts in English, Gujarati, Hindi and Arabic.

(42) Apart from those who are strictly vegetarian by religious obligation (Brahmans, Jains, etc.), the ratio of vegetarians is higher among the *Choti Jat* (low class castes) than among the middle class. Meat consumption is very closely associated with alcohol. It is therefore higher among men than women, particularly among the *Banya* (Patel, Lohana). It is also related to regional origin: the Cutchis are massively vegetarian; the Punjabis (attached to a regional tradition of sophisticated gastronomy dating back to the presence of the Moghul sovereigns) are mostly meat eaters (the Sikh as well as some representatives of the other religions). One of the reasons why Punjabis and Gujaratis have difficulties socializing is due to the fact that Punjabis are often meat and alcohol consumers whereas Gujaratis are all more or less strictly vegetarian.

constraints than to strict religious and ritual prescriptions, in which subjugation to the need for purity (*jutha*) can easily be identified. It is not so surprising given that this particular and over-defined dietary mode applies to everyone and has identically been reproduced for generations. Despite the many decades that have gone by since the first days of the emigration, there is not a single Indian-African who can accept to, even occasionally, compromise the absolute rule of never departing from the dietary prescriptions. This dietary exclusiveness has some consequences in terms of relationships: even though – having gone past any other type of impediments – commensality cannot be ruled out between Indians and Africans, it can only happen asymmetrically based on the Indian dietary model.

As the chapter on family points out a little further, the great complexity in the recipes, the length of preparation and the wide range of dishes at every meal, as well as the preparation of ordinary meals demand from women a lot of domestic work. That explains the large number of restaurants that have traditional cuisine in their menu. Mostly patronised by men, these restaurants also cater for whole families, particularly at the weekend. For several years now, it has become imperative almost everywhere to hire cooks of African origin at home. In the eyes of Africans this is considered an important innovation that is indicative of decisive symbolic progress among the representatives of the diaspora⁴³.

Once again, apart from the Catholic Goans, who have for a long time embraced Western adjustments, the retention of dress styles and body aesthetics is another characteristic of Indian-African

(43) Other more casual or festive dietary customs were maintained during immigration. This is the case of the quid of areca or betel, particularly among men. Having a sialagogue action and supposed to have digestive virtues, it is especially taken after meals. In the cities of East Africa, there are Indian districts with small-scale manufacturers of quid of betel whose stalls, fitted with some form of counter, display a wide variety of sugary ingredients for making quid of one's choice. The classic recipe consists of spreading a fine layer on a leaf of betel (*pawn*, *kapoori*) a mixture of lime and *katho* (scarlet powder that heavily colours saliva). The leaf is then filled with sharpened areca walnut to which is sometimes added pieces of dates and various colourful and fragrant syrups to one's taste (cardamom, anise, mint, etc.). The product looks like some sort of big vegetable slipper that fills the mouth of a strong sugary flavour. Among the other sweet appetisers or digestives, the popular kiosks also offer *faludas* (milk-based cream dessert with spices, jelly and ice cream), *sowadana* (a mixture of caraway and sesame seeds), or *gori* (set of small pills made from tobacco, mint and other spice to which opium was added to it in the past). For prophylactic purposes, *neem* is used. It is a small and very bitter leaf considered to be an efficient adjuvant of skin softness.

cultures, particularly among all types of women and in lower class and populous areas. Both inside and outside the house, regardless of the community they belong to or their region of origin, women mostly wear saris embellished with a veil of similar colour (*ordeni*) together with a tunic (*kamiz*) and trousers (*pajama*) if they are from the northern Indian tradition. The wearing of a light head veil, which in the past would be lowered to cover the mouth, comes from female confinement rule inherited from Muslim influence (*purdah* or *dupatta*). With the exception of young girls, a minority of newly married young women, and some representatives of religious minorities (Ismaili community, reformed Bohra community), it is rare for women to permanently adopt Western attire; those who do it retain, in any case, their traditional clothing for community and religious events.

Bohra community women wear long-sleeve tunics (*kamiz*) and sport discreetly colourful attire (clear beige, pink, pale blue). Keeping off the *sari*, they generally cover their heads with a small hood that flows to the shoulders (*ridha*) and is elegantly arranged. To conform to supposed feminine modesty requirements, which is more or less imposed by the current religious direction, this garment is relatively new (about fifteen years old). It replaces the *sari*, which in the past used to be worn by all Indian women, regardless of their religion⁴⁴.

Apart from the Bohra community, men generally dress Western away from home. In the intimacy of their homes or on festive occasions, they don traditional attire in white or ivory: long shirts (*kurta*) or tunic (*kamiz*) and narrow trousers (*pajama* still called *panjabi*). For Muslims, this attire is often a must at the mosque, while at Hindu temples it gives way to the simple seamless *peplum* (*chomin*, known as *dhoti* in northern India). Bohra community men often display traditional adjustment in daily life and all of them or nearly all permanently wear the small Islamic white cap embroidered with golden threads. The Sikhs are noticeable by their large turban that conceals their long hair and whose colour (white or black) is an indication of their intra-community belonging. Whether Muslim or Hindu, the men can occasionally keep a moustache, but never the beard except for the Bohra community and the Sikhs. Hindu men (and, in fact, Muslim men as well) are

(44) Refer further to the chapter on socio-religious communities.

not allowed to wear gold. Some have a silver ring decorated with a red or orange stone called *haqiq* (amulet). Among the Hindu, the use of leather shoes or any other leather object (purse, watchstrap), which was strictly forbidden in the past because of contact between the body and a piece of animal, is now accepted and widespread⁴⁵. Even though among Hindu married women old ornamental practices, such as inscribing a colourful point on the lower forehead (*sindhor* or *bindi*) or the insertion of a jewel on the left side of the nose (*sari*) are now considered vestiges of the past, the usual wearing of bracelets or golden jewellery is still a must. It is the same case among the Muslims (particularly the Bohra community) for the beautiful practice of having colourful red-brown geometric drawings on palms of the hand and on the ankles.

- d) The social and domestic organization of Indian-Africans, which is described in more detail in the chapter on family⁴⁶, follows complex arrangements whose structure has nevertheless hardly changed since the earliest days of immigration. Often placed in the category of the indivisible family (in reality an “asymmetric communal family” in the typology of *Le Play* (1871), the traditional family has remarkably resisted the assaults of modernization in spite of strong protests from the youth, who are well versed in Western ways.

In the asymmetric communal family model (*joint family*), brothers cohabit with their wives and their children (Kapadia 1966). Property is treated as indivisible possession among brothers (*bhay*) who can incorporate, if the need arises, parallel cousins, adopted boys and brothers-in-law (variant known as *mitakshara* unique to northern India). The younger brother who desires to leave the community must sacrifice his share, unless in the best of cases he receives a small consolation. Even though for several decades now the joint brothers have given up the cohabitation in the strict sense of the word (even when they reside more often than not in the same area), it is in business management that this model has best found its expression. Under the shadow of the patriarch’s (*bapuji*) watch, the brothers often work in the same office and share managerial duties (financial management, staff management, etc.).

(45) This repulsion with regard to shoes (or leather cases for cameras) explains the need to leave them outside Hindu temples.

(46) See the chapter below by Michel Adam, “Family, family life and marriage...”

As mentioned in the chapter on socio-religious communities, the Ismaili community and the minority Bohra community were pioneers in the emergence of a push for not only social reform aimed both at emancipating women but also for the increase of more “out of the norm”, away from the more liberal areas, in “out of the norm” matrimonial unions and “reconstituted” families. In the majority of cases, on the other hand, caste endogamy (an issue that will be explored later) remains the norm and marriages continue to be arranged. Among the Muslims (Shia in particular), the preference for domestic endogamy (Ego marriage with a patrilateral parallel cousin) strengthens cohesion in the group of brothers and reconstitutes in the second generation the equivalence between brothers (first cousins) and brothers-in-law. Divorces are a very rare exception. They are completely forbidden among the Hindu but sometimes tolerated among the Sikhs; their occurrence is generally limited among the Muslims by obligatory intervention of conciliation processes. Remarrying widows and divorcees is not allowed. In most families, the home is a space that strangers, particularly males, cannot easily access. Being the primary institution, with places of worship and premises for association, for ancient traditions (particularly dietary tradition), it remains under a patriarch’s control – in reality overshadowed by his wife, the near-absolute mistress of the household – and whose authority cannot be undermined.

Whereas they tend to die away in other Indian diaspora countries (notably in South Africa), the caste classes remain in existence in East Africa, as indicated a little earlier, without ever being explicit, except through corporatist associations (*gnati*), its sweetened and respectable contemporary manifestation.

Few Indian-Africans acknowledge the persistence of caste prejudices within their community. Members of the higher castes, who vocally display their class origins, defend their identity by saying they attach very few relational consequences to it. Whereas the number of castes in Africa is much lower than in India (about twenty compared to several thousand), rare are the lower caste members who have failed to accomplish any real leap in personal development, including accessing traditionally reserved professions. Attributing this to democratic principles, they do not tend any less to disguise their origins, either by drawing falsified family trees or suggesting that the situation of their

ancestors could have been due to a momentary and collective lowering of their previous class⁴⁷.

Are the castes condemned to rapid extinction in East Africa? An analysis made over fifty years ago by British anthropologist David Pocock (Pocock 1957) made a distinction between the 'caste system', whose consistency was compromised, and the 'caste classes', which was obviously an enduring social reality. This analysis still seems relevant today. It explains – as we will see now – that the strength of subscription to class produces its most significant effect less in the professional than in the matrimonial domain.

According to Célestin Bouglé's classic analysis, the caste system is organized along three principles: 'hierarchy', 'hereditary specialization' and 'reciprocal repulsion' (Bouglé 1969: 2-3). That the first two principles can no longer apply to the situation in the diaspora can be easily verified. Indeed, as long as it forms a system, the caste social model functions correctly only if all the castes are represented in the hierarchical order that corresponds both to the functional division of labour and symbolically prescribed ritual exchanges. Without this complementarity – which, by closing up every group in a particular area of intervention, excludes competitive relationships and conflicts of belonging – every caste is able to acquire real economic and symbolic autonomy and go beyond its initial status. This is the situation in East Africa where, owing to the risks of immigration as well as to community dispersion (notably in the small provincial towns), some castes are over-represented (for example Patels, Lohanas, Banyas) while others are absent (the largest part of the *sudra* castes, as well as the "outcasts" or "untouchables"), whereas sometimes there is lack of control and regulation that can maintain the *status quo*'s good order (particularly the representatives of the priestly class). What remains in East Africa of the complex link that once existed in India between the ploughman and the cowherd, the cowherd and the tanner, between these and the multiple craftsmen as well as specialized tradesmen, and between all these groups and the representatives of the

(47) See the chapter on socio-religious communities for the example of *gnatis* demanding *Kshatriya* ascendancy. With the influence of reformist movements such as Arya Samaj, some Indians of the African diaspora today tend to think that *varnas* ranking is associated with merit or personal qualifications, and not heritage. Underlined by Gandhi, this gloss line of thought leads to the dissociation of *varna* from the *jati* system, and to the reconstitution of honorary classes altogether. Thus, a person from a low caste of craftsmen (*choti jât*) can be ranked in the *vaishya* category if s/he honourably succeeds in business, or even in the Brahman class in case s/he opts for an intellectual profession. Such an interpretation is in formal contradiction with Bhagavadgita's canonical affirmation that "one must do the work he is born to do".

administrative, political and religious hierarchy? As we will see a little later, the professional distortions that affect all the castes, more or less without exception, are therefore understandable.

These distortions, however, do not go so far as to affect the honorary and ceremonial status that are unique to every caste and that appear as the final guarantee of the symbolic hierarchy defended so vehemently by the higher castes. They correspond to the persistence of the third principle (the 'reciprocal repulsion' that generates avoidance and endogamy) – though it is now manifest in the price of expensive contortions (distance marriages) and relational accommodation between representatives of fragmented groups⁴⁸. We saw previously that in a traditional setting (described many times by the authors here) collective status promotion is possible in India, most often when members of the group are simultaneously able to change professions and impose on their entourage the existence of truncated family trees. If in East Africa, as we have just mentioned, the first condition corresponds to the trajectory of many pretenders to social ascension, the latter is less easy to fulfil considering the existence of networks of mutual acquaintance unique to north-western India (the region where most of the immigrants come from). Finally, there is a third hurdle for the credibility of the travesty. Any pretence about rise in class necessarily dictates that the group undergoing upward mobility models its behaviour on the Brahman reference ideal (adherence of vegetarianism and prescriptions of relational contact, etc.). However, this transformation in daily conduct finds itself on a contradictory path with the opportunistic necessities of professional success that necessitate increased contact with groups known to be impure (Europeans and Africans). How can one avoid occasionally taking meat or alcohol under professional circumstances, etc.? The social upward mobility aspirations are therefore in contradiction with both economic progress and the need to fit into the wider society⁴⁹.

(48) In East Africa, the rule that bars different *jati* members from sharing food has been relaxed. For example, commensality is possible between Brahmans and Lohanas (traders), Bathias (traders), Sonis (goldsmiths), Darjis (tailors); but it is impossible with Dhobis (laundrymen), Mochis (shoemakers) and Kumbhars (potters).

(49) On class travesty in India, see also Morris (1956: 203).

Partial survival of the community and class division of labour

We alluded a little earlier to community and class division of labour established during British colonial rule. Independence weakened the very foundation of this model following the rise of the Africans and the decline of the Europeans. Yet, the social strengths behind it were maintained due to the sustainability of the advantages gained for decades and the consolidation of the sociocultural structure that had ensured their protection. This explains the survival, at least partially in Kenya, and even perceivably in Tanzania and Uganda, of a religious and ethnic division of labour both within the population, and within the Indian diaspora in particular.

Let us take Kenya as an example: an approximate review based on various assessments suggested by economists shows that families of Indian descent have maintained involvement in 80% of the industrial sectors: construction, metallurgy, small-scale mechanics, glass, chemist and pharmaceutical products, food, textile and clothing sectors, furniture, motor vehicle assembly and spare parts, electricity, timber and carpentry⁵⁰.

A study carried out in 1997 by the French Embassy in Kenya estimated that Indians controlled 90% of business activities and a substantial fraction of industry (P.E.I.K. 1997). 75% of the members of an important pressure group on government institutions, Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM), were Indian (P.E.I.K. 1997: 22). Led for several years by Indian-Kenyan figures, it is now under the chairmanship of Oshwal Jain, Vimal Shah (head of Bidco Oil Refineries) as its chairman⁵¹.

(50) Reference is especially made to David Himbara's study, though a bit old (1994).

(51) The chairman of the Uganda Manufacturers Association is also a personality of Indian origin, Abid Alam. With a large processing industry, strong tourist capacity and a fast-growing agro-export sector, Kenya is the main economic power in East Africa and one of the leading economies on the African continent after South Africa. Estimates of the study by the French Embassy corroborate the findings by several economists in 1990 that 75% of the businesses with more than 100 salaried employees and 84% of those with capital of over 100 million shillings were in the hands of Indian families (Grignon 1996: 498).

Table 1.3 Industrial sectors in which Indian-Kenyans were highest ranking in 2008⁵²:

- **Textile industry** (about 75% of investments: 50 textile and spinning mills, 350 clothing businesses): *Industrial Plant* (P.S. Sandhu) and other businesses owned by Nitin Chandaria and Girish Chande; as well as *Kamryn Industries Ltd* (Aga Khan); this sector is currently adversely affected by competition from imported products from India and the Middle East.
- **Pharmaceutical industry and laboratories** (60% of investments), including two businesses fully controlled by Indian financiers: *Cadila* and *UB Pharma*; as well as *Lab & Allied*, *Cosmos*, *Elys* (Hindu Patel families), *Regal Pharmaceuticals*, *Metro Pharmaceuticals* (Shah families), *Macs Pharmaceuticals* (Sunni Muslim Chaudhry family); Indian-Kenyan businesses are also leading in generic medicine imports, particularly from India, the leading world producer of this type of medicines; among the big importers is Beta Health Care (J.H. Shah)⁵⁴.
- **Agro-food industry**: *Bidco Oil Refineries Ltd* (Vimal B. Shah, Oshwal Jain), *United Millers Ltd* (Sunil N. Shah, Oshwal Jain), *House of Dawda* (H. Dawda, Lohana Hindu), *Premier Foods*, *Farmer's Choice* (Diamond Laljee, Ismaili), *Truc Foods* (R. Malde).
- **Paper and packaging industry**: *Panafrican Paper Mills Ltd* (N.K. Mohatta), *Prestige Packaging Ltd* (Bimal Kantaria), *Chandaria Industries* (Maganlal Chandaria), *All Pack Industries* (Aga Khan), *Cardboard Manufacturers* (K. Shah), *Dodhia Packaging* (Shah), *Sil Pack Industries* (N. Shah), *Paper Bags Ltd* (K. Shah).
- **Tyres**: *Sameer Group* (Naushad Merali, Ithnasheri Muslim), *Nyanza Tires* (N. Shah).

(52) Source: study by the author that complements an earlier study by the French Embassy in Kenya. Gidraph Wairire presents a more detailed picture of these activities further below in his chapter on Indian-Kenyan businesses.

(53) The Federation of Kenya Pharmaceutical Manufacturers (FKPM) is entirely controlled by members of the Indian diaspora (Oshwal Jain and Shia Bohra community). See KMD (2006). The Kenyan pharmaceutical industry produces about 20% of the medicine consumed (including anti-retroviral generics), with the remaining 80% being imported mainly from India, and to a lesser extent from Europe and South Africa (The Pharmaceutical Sector in Kenya 2005).

- **Chemical industry, plastic material and industrial packaging** (sector 90% controlled by Indian-Kenyans): *Everyday Batteries* (Naushad Merali), *Plastic and Rubber Industries* (Aga Khan), *Kenya Litho Ltd* (Aga Khan), *Kenpoly* (D. H. Chandaria), *Acme Containers* (Mukesh Shah, supplying to Coca Cola, breweries, etc.); and also *Crown Industries* (Shah), *Packaging Industries* (N. Shah), *Metro-Plastics* (H. Shah), *General Plastics* (R. Shah).
- **Iron industry:** (80% controlled by Indian-Kenyans): *Steel Africa Ltd* (Suli J. Shah), *Kenya Aluminium Industrial Works Ltd and Africa Metal Co* (Manu Chandaria), *Mabati Rolling Mills* (Manu Chandaria & S.J. Shah), *Tononoka Steel* (N. Savala, Oshwal Jain), *Devki Steel Works* (N. Rawal, Brahman Hindu); and also *Apax Steel* (P. Nathwani, Lohana Hindu), *Insteel* (Manu Chandaria & S.J. Shah), *Steel Makers Ltd* (R. Patel), *Corrugated Iron* (Patel Hindu).
- **Cement:** *Athi River Mining* (Pradeep Paurana), company also present in Tanzania.
- **Utility and passenger transport motor vehicle assembly:** *Marshall's-Tata* (controlled in the past by Ketan Somaia), *Ashok-Leyland*, which includes import businesses, especially *Colt Simba* (A.K.C., Popot, Ismaili).
- **Printing** (several small-scale plants, 60% controlled by Indian-Kenyans): *General Printers Limited* (Suru Tanna, Lohana Hindu); and also *RAMCO* (R. Patel), *Printing Industries* (K. Dave, Brahman Hindu), *Print First* (K. Shah), *Rodwell Press* (Gudka), *Regal Press* (C.B. Shah), *Bizone Ltd* (Patel), *Kenya Litho* (Aga Khan), *Modern Litho*, etc.
- **Leather industry:** *Leather Industries of Kenya*, *Embassy Industries Ltd* (Aga Khan).
- **Electrical production:** *Tsavo Power* (Aga Khan).
- **Electrical material and installation** (90% Indian-Kenyan): *Switchgear* (N. Shah), *Power Technics* (Naresh Mehta, Navnat Jain), *Mehter Electrical* (P. Mehta, Visa Oshwal Jain), *Reliable* (P. Shah, Navnat Jain).
- **Domestic electrical appliances:** *Reefer Manufacturers Ltd* (Aga Khan).
- **Industrial fishing** (Lake Victoria): *Alpha* (Aga Khan).

The involvement of Indian-Africans in various sectors of the economy has varied with time, especially since most Indian entrepreneurs – taking advantage of the ability of families to divide labour and the transnational networks often associated with them – alternate and sometimes combine investment and speculation, trade and production, with the latter activities being used in all sectors without exception, even in agriculture. This is how, for example, after making money in the early 1980s in the resale of Ugandan coffee obtained from the black

market, Indian businessmen engaged in setting up (or recapitalization of) banks in Kenya⁵⁴. Other investors purchased agricultural land in the coastal areas of Kenya and Tanzania and set up in the two countries integrated plantation textile production (cotton, sisal) for spinning and weaving⁵⁵. Similar agro-industrial integration operations were carried out for the production of sugar in Kisumu, a region between Uganda and Kenya. After securing markets, Indian businessmen in Kenya engaged in the integrated production of fresh fruits and vegetables as well as cut flowers for export, quickly taking up an important place in this market⁵⁶. Whereas land buyers are today representatives of several communities (Hindus, Sunni, Ismaili, Ithnasheri Muslims, etc.), during the decade between 1970 and 1980, most of the agricultural land was bought by Sikhs, essentially representing the Jat or Zamindar group whose attachment to land in India is well-known. In Uganda, Tanzania, and even in western Kenya (Eldoret and Kisumu), large tracts of land were thus acquired for wheat, coffee, tea and sugar cane production. Such land transfers were not always condemned by Africans, who considered agriculture more honourable and less predatory than business –business being widely perceived as an area where prosperity was achieved at the expense of Africans⁵⁷.

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- (54) After the collapse of the Ugandan shilling following political upheavals in the 1975-1985 decade, Indian buyers bought Ugandan coffee at low prices and resold it on international markets at a higher price, taking advantage of the wave of high prices at the time. After President Daniel arap Moi dismantled banks in Kenya controlled by members of the Kikuyu group in 1983, these Indian speculators invested massively in this financial sector. As also indicated previously, businesses that had been abandoned in 1982 in Kenya, as well as several multinational companies abandoned by their Anglo-American shareholders, were bought back cheaply in 1985 by their former owners (Grignon 1998; Prunier 1998).
- (55) Located in Nyanza (west of the country), the Rift Valley and along the coast, the cotton production from Kenyan plantations was inadequate to meet the needs of the local cotton industry that had to import from Uganda and Tanzania. Kenya also imported part of its textiles and clothes (*The textile and clothing industry in the Kenya* 2005). This was the same in Uganda and Tanzania where the production of the textile industry, though high, could not meet the needs.
- (56) The sale of fresh fruits and vegetables (92% to the EU) as well as cut flowers accounts for 50% of the Kenya's export revenue. This sub-sector employs about 2 million people (*Vegetables and fruits in Kenya* 2006). The Frigoken brand (Aga Khan) dominates fresh fruits and vegetables in Kenya.
- (57) It is almost impossible to do an inventory of recent land acquisitions, and even more difficult to identify the beneficiaries. Some among them are known, like the Aga Khan and the Merali family (Ithnasheri Shia), who are tea plantation owners. Others include Patel groups and Sunni Muslim families in Kenya's Central Province and in Ukambani region.

Table 1.4 Indian-Kenyan investments in agriculture and agro-industry in Kenya (2008):

- **Sugar and sugar industry** (essentially in Nyanza and Kisumu): *Kibos Sugar* (Sikhs), *Miwani Sugar* (Sikhs), *Agro Food & Chemical* (Mehta family), *West Kenya Sugar* (Patel Hindus);
- **Cotton, sisal and textile fibres**: Girish Chande (Lohana Hindu) and a number of farmers along the coast;
- **Fruits (mangoes)**: a number of small-scale farmers in the coastal region and Ukambani area (Patel Hindus, Sunni Muslims, etc.);
- **Grains** (Narok region, Rift Valley, Eldoret): *Global Freight* (Ithnasheri Shia families), *Raiplay* (Sikhs), L. Chab (Sikhs), R.M. Patel (Patel Hindus);
- **Tea and coffee**: *Sasini Tea & Coffee* (Naushad Merali, Shia Ithnasheri), Dejee Medjee (Patel Hindu, also mango producers);
- **Fresh fruits and vegetables, horticulture and cut flowers** (a number of farmers in Nairobi and Naivasha areas): *Frigoken* (Aga Khan), *Sunripe Ltd* (Shanti Shah), *A.A.A. Growers* (Ismailis), *East Africa Growers Ltd* (Punjabi Hindus Arya Samaj), *KHE* (Patel Hindus), *Vecipro-Umang* (Punjabi Hindus), *Prima Rosa* (Kamani family, Navnat Jains), *East African Growers* (Mahjan family, Punjabi Hindus), P.J. Dave (Brahman Hindu family), etc.

Source: study by author

The involvement of Indian interests in the banking sector is considerable. In Kenya, 25 out of a total of 44 banks (including four leading banks) are entirely or partly controlled by Indian groups. In Uganda, four of the main banks are also in the hands of Indian-African families. Financial groups that are predominantly Indian-African in Kenya also control the insurance sector, a significant portion of import-export activities, a significant part of the hotel industry (Ismailis) and the main pro-opposition mass-circulation daily, *The Daily Nation* (Ismailis)⁵⁸. At a more diversified financial scale, Indian-Kenyans hold virtual monopoly in many businesses and services: telecommunications (Celtel)⁵⁹, wholesale

(58) Indian-Africans own a little over half of Kenya's hotel industry. For example Serena (about twenty hotels owned by Aga Khan), the Sarova chain (7 hotels, including Stanley Hotel in Nairobi, owned by an Indian-African consortium); a number of big hotels along the Indian Ocean coast: Bamburi Beach Hotels (Aga Khan), Reef Hotel (Sikhs), Leopard Beach Hotel, Baobab Beach Hotel, etc. The chairman of the Mombasa and Coast Tourist Association is Mr. Kuldip Sandhi (Sikh), owner of the Reef Hotel around Mombasa.

(59) Second operator in Kenya after Safaricom and owned by the Sameer Group (Ithnasheri Shia).

and retail businesses, real estate, computer services, advertising, tourist agencies, garages and service stations, shopping malls (Sarit Centre, Village Market in Nairobi) as well as one of the two main retail chains (Nakumatt, controlled by a Visa Oshwal Jain group). Finally, real estate investment is an individual resource booster which the vast majority of manufacturers and businessmen turn to. As a financial shock absorber (especially in the current situation of fresh competition in the retail sector), purchase and resale of land for building, investment property, industrial buildings, villas and rental apartments are often the main income for many small and medium-scale businessmen⁶⁰.

Table 1.5 Banks and insurance companies in Kenya (2007–2008)

I. Banks	
1.	African Banking Corporation Ltd (ABC Bank), Shamaz Savani, Hindu, 7 agencies classified as Medium in the Banking Survey of Kenya
2.	Bank of Baroda, K.N. Manvi, 6 agencies classified as Medium
3.	Bank of India, A.K. Jalota, 4 agencies classified as Medium
4.	Chase Bank Ltd Kenya, Zafrullah Khan (mixed capital), 2 agencies classified as Small
5.	City Finance Bank Ltd, S.V. Ramani (mixed capital, involving Equity Bank run by Africans), 1 agency classified as Small
6.	Commercial Bank of Africa Ltd, Isaac Awuondo (mixed capital, including the Kenyatta family), 12 agencies classified as Large in the Banking Survey of Kenya (No. 6 overall)
7.	Credit Bank, Narendra K. Agrarwal (mixed capital, mostly capital from Africans), 4 agencies classified as Small

(60) We do not mention here other profitable activities like taxi hire and urban minibuses. In Mombasa, for example, almost all taxicabs belong to small Indian-African or Arab companies and are rented to drivers, who are generally African. The drivers commit to return the cars every evening to the owner's garage and hand him 70% of the revenue (checked against the figures on the milometre) after refilling the car at their expense. Owners have to meet the costs of service and maintenance. Drivers also rent the urban transport minibuses, also owned by Indian or Arab families (5,000 shillings or 50 € per day in 2008). At the rate of 10 shillings per passenger (flat fare), the drivers can hope for a 7,000 to 8,000-shilling (80 €) gross revenue, from which they have to pay for fuel and remunerate the conductor. The owners' income remains low, considering the ware and tare as well as maintenance costs.

(61) Distribution of the 25 banks (out of the total 44) entirely or partly controlled by Indian-Kenyan capital (ranked by Ochieng Oloo 2007, *The Banking Survey of Kenya*: 259): 4 banks are classified as Large (Tier I Banks, out of 11), 10 banks are classified as Medium (Tier II Banks, out of 14), and 11 banks are classified as Small (Tier III Banks, out of 19).

8. Credit Finance Corporation Bank (CFC), M. Soundararajan (mixed capital, particularly South Africans), 6 agencies classified as Large
9. Diamond Trust Bank Ltd, Nasim Devjee (Aga Khan), 5 agencies classified as Large (No. 10 overall)
10. EABS Bank Ltd, R. Arora (Hindu), 9 agencies classified as Medium
11. Equatorial Commercial Bank Ltd, Hassan Rizvi & Sameer Merali Group (Ithnasheri Shia Muslims), 2 agencies classified as Small
12. Fidelity Commercial Bank Ltd, Sultan Khimjee & Raminder Bir Singh, 3 agencies classified as Small
13. Fina Bank Ltd, Frank Griffiths & D.H. Chandaria (mixed capital), 5 agencies classified as Medium
14. Giro Commercial Bank Ltd, Gidoomal family (Hindu), & M.P. Sastry, 6 agencies classified as Medium
15. Guardian Bank Ltd, M. Chandaria family & Gopinath H. Bhatt, 5 agencies classified as Medium
16. Habib Bank A.G. Zurich, Muhammad H. Habib, Iqbal A. Allawala (Muslim family), 4 agencies classified as Medium
17. Habib Bank Ltd, Dawood Habib family (Agha Khan), 4 agencies classified as Small
18. Imperial Bank, A. Janmohamed (Muslim family), 5 agencies classified as Medium
19. Investment and Mortgages Bank also known as I&M Bank, Suresh Raja, Sarit Shah (Oshwal Jains) & Arun S. Mathur, 9 agencies classified as Large (No. 7 overall)
20. Middle East Bank Kenya, A. Esmail, Peter Harris (mixed capital, dominantly Belgian), 2 agencies classified as Small
21. Oriental Commercial Bank Ltd, Shanti Shah, B.K. Dutta (Hindu, mixed capital), 4 agencies classified as Small
22. Paramount Universal Bank, Manilal Doodhia (Visa Oshwal Jain family) & Ayaz Merali, 3 agencies classified as Small
23. Prime Bank Ltd, Rosik C. Kantaria (Hindu) & Vasant K. Shetty, 9 agencies classified as Medium
24. Prime Capital and Credit Finance Ltd, Rosik C. Kantaria (Hindu), 1 agency classified as Small

25. Victoria Commercial Bank Ltd, Yogesh K. Pattni (Hindu), 1 agency classified as Small

Sources: Oloo (2007) and study by the author.

II. Insurance companies (2008, about 40% Indian capital):

1. Apollo-APA (Visa Oshwal Jain and other African capital)
2. Cannon (Talwar, Punjabi Hindu)
3. CFC Life Heritage (P.K. Jani, Brahman Hindu and other African capital)
4. Fidelity Shield Insurance (M. Kurjee, Ismaili)
5. Geminia (M. Shah, Visa Oshwal Jain)
6. General Accident (M. Shah, Visa Oshwal Jain)
7. Jubilee Insurance & Diamond Trust Bank Associates (Aga Khan)
8. Kenindia (Manu Chandaria, Malindra Mehta, Lohana Hindu and other Indian capital)*
9. Trident Insurance (Diamond Laljee, Ismaili)

* The Kenindia general insurance company is the result of a merger in 1978 of four Indian companies with subsidiaries in Kenya: New India Insurance Co, United India Insurance Co, Woriental, Fire & General Insurance Co, Life Insurance Corporation of India. Kenindia is the largest insurance company in East Africa.

Source: study by author.

There was a debate throughout the 1990s between proponents of purely African capitalism (mainly Kenyan Kikuyu) and Indian businessmen, the key players in the region's industrial development, in which the latter blamed the former of overestimating the capacity for initiative and investment of African capitalists who are still largely held prisoners by a profit and speculation economy model (Grignon 1996 based on Swainson 1980; Himbara 1993, 1994, 1997). If it is true that matching the business achievements against the entrepreneurial success stories recorded over thirty years, then some African personalities – either as competitors or partners of Indian-Africans – are fresh from winning accolades, they remain a small minority compared to the latter, who easily win accolades, and have undoubtedly been at it for much longer.

Let us add that Indian-Africans are not content with occupying a major position in the economies of their respective host countries. They have sometimes acquired leading positions and property outside Africa,

even at the heart of industrial Europe. This is particularly the case in the United Kingdom where the six leading distributors of pharmaceutical products in 2005 were Indian-Kenyans⁶².

The influence of Indian-Africans goes well beyond the spheres of production, import-export, finance, distribution and services. In the whole of Kenya, a simple look at the professional pages of telephone directories reveals that representatives of the Indian diaspora are more than 30% of the lawyers, accountants and architects, 35% of the doctors, 25% of the surgeon dentists, and 25% of the dispensing pharmacists⁶³. In much smaller proportions (which could not be established), Kenyans of Indian origin also occupy high public service and university positions apart from being members of senior management positions and pilots in airlines.

Indian-African businesses

Beyond its financial, legal and social characteristics, the power wielded by members of the Indian diaspora in some sectors is also reflected in the very strictly patrimonial nature of business capital firms as well as the community aspects and the broadly nepotistic policy of recruiting staff.

- a) We talked a little earlier about the persistence in East Africa of the joint communal family model, which is widespread in northern India (Kapadia 1966). Peter Lachiaier (1992) attempted to describe the family business model, known as “lineage market firm”, prevalent in India among Cutchi Lohana Hindus but whose exact equivalent is observable among members of the diaspora community. Capital raised within the family remains very frequently concentrated in the hands of the founder (the first generation patriarch) while the group of sons share amongst themselves administrative and managerial responsibilities and prepare the company for expansion, and then bequeath having done as much as they could, a position to each grandson. Although not a guarantee given internal family disputes, this desire for expansion – which leads both to more sons and business growth – can be related, according to Pierre Lachiaier,

(62) Vijay & Bikhu Patel (*Waymade Healthcare*), Bharat Shah (*Sigma Pharmaceuticals*), Navin Engineer (*Chemidex*), Naresh Shah (*Jumbogate*), Bharat & Ketahn Mehta (*Necessity Supplies*), Ravi Karia (*Chemilines*). See *The Financial Post*, Nov. 21-27th, 2005: 7-14.

(63) In 1963, the figures for the three professions of doctors, teachers and lawyers were as follows: Doctors: 330 out of 594 (55.5%); teachers: 1,005 out of 1,745 (57.5%); lawyers: 329 out of 354 (93%). See Salvadori (1989: 10).

to the fact that “every Hindu is born with debts on the head” (1992: 866). Sometimes called “theological”, these debts are a sign of gratitude to the deities (they are then paid as a sacrifice). Other founding entities, like the wise visionary origins, commentators of Veda or ancestral figures (*sapinda*) also demand offerings, forcing any human being to enhance their charitable ability and sire sons to proceed in turn with the libations (*Ibid.*: 866). The contemporary increase in inheritance disagreements – between father and son or brothers – is as a result not only of the rise in individualism, but also the gradual opening up of capital to people outside the nuclear family⁶⁴.

- b) In a typical Indian-African business, the top executives belong to the family circle or people from the same community in the narrow sense of the word (same religious affiliation, same caste, same region of origin), while the junior and middle level staff are recruited from a wider community circle (belonging to other castes, but from the same region of origin, for example). Although Indian-African businesses employ largely African staff, this staff are generally relegated to junior positions. With the notable exception of some Ismaili institutions (media and hospitals), few African staff are recruited to hold positions of responsibility or that would ensure promotion to senior management.

Among Indian minorities, the old caste divisions of work have partly remained without hindering the professional economic progress because of the combined phenomenon of modernization of techniques and capitalist concentration.

Except for a few marginalized “rockets”, the persistence within the diaspora of some pockets of poverty seems to be partly related, in the first place, to caste affiliations. The Indian poor, who are not very visible as they are secluded in old Indian neighbourhoods neglected by their occupants (in Nairobi, for example, the most

(64) More than thirty years ago, John Zarwan studied various capitalistic ownership formulas in Indian-African businesses. The first formula, which does not jeopardize traditional patrimonial autonomy, is sharing between father and son: from the first day of involvement in the family business, every son gains a certain percentage of the profits (generally 1%), with his share increasing every year at the same rate. The profits thus earned are not really paid out but placed in a family holding, which is sometimes based abroad. The second formula, known as Business Group, which is now widespread, brings together several family ownerships that may not necessarily belong to the same communities (consortium of Jains and Lohanas, for example). The third formula is international holding, with several contemporary examples (Chandaria, Merali, etc.). See Zarwan (1977).

dilapidated parts of Kirinyaga or Pangani areas), are often found in the lowest class categories: Kumbhar Gujarati potters, Cutchi Sunnis, etc. It is impossible to number these people, who have been forsaken in social emancipation and who form disparate groups, being small artisans, unskilled workers, service workers, long-term unemployed, or poor elderly people⁶⁵.

Secondly, with regards to what has been mentioned above, specialization by caste is still noticeable in many professions. Moreover, it should be noted at the outset that such specialization cannot be – and never has been – only relative, given as already noted, the very small number of *jati* represented in the diaspora. Even though, as equally noted in the chapter on socio-religious communities, a majority of Brahmans are, like in the past, in an intellectual profession (lawyer, university, banking, etc.), other groups at the tail end of the social hierarchy have embraced modernity while maintaining symbolic attachment to their identity base. Sonis, formerly goldsmiths, now hold all the watches and jewellery shops and control the precious stones business; the Dhobis (laundry workers) exercise a monopoly in the cleaning-ironing business; the Mochi (“cobblers”) dominate leather and footwear work (manufacture, wholesale and retail business); the Lohanas (cloth merchants) and the Memon Sunnis (former Lohanas converted to Islam) maintain their grip on the textile wholesale business, while Wanza Darji (“tailors”) are specialists in the clothing industry. Ramgarhia Sikhs (Tarkhan, Raj, Luhar) dominate construction and automobile businesses (auto mechanics, spare part sales, service stations, etc.), and even sometimes in the agro-industry business (where the Zamindar, high class Sikhs, have invested). Other categories have undergone more progressive changes. Owners of elegant hair salons, Nayee (“barbers”), are also physicians and surgeons – a symbolic continuum similar to the changes Europe experienced over three centuries. The Sutars, former carpenters, are now public works contractors, architects and engineers.

Linked or not to caste membership, there are also specializations that go with regional origins or religious beliefs – for doctrinal or circumstantial reasons. As noted by Goody (1999: 152), Hindus in general (and the breakaway groups in particular) are not opposed

(65) The Hindu Council and the Chandaria Foundation help these destitutes.

to interest on credit, like Muslims are, but some minority groups within them do demonstrate some degree of tolerance in this respect. This could explain the high proportion of schismatic communities among Indian businessmen in East Africa as well as their specialization in certain activities. In general, it appears that investment in the money business was, like in India, a preserve of the Jains and Ismailis, and overseas business that of the Bohra Shia, Ismailis and some Hindu groups⁶⁶. Traditionally, long distance Bohra traders (who, for their part, condemn interest on credit) have diversified their activities, with some of them curiously acquiring, as we noted earlier, monopoly in hardware and glassware business. As for the Sunnis, some specializations amongst them could not be explained. Thus the Sunni Cutchi (who were initially divided into so many sub-castes) are generally small-scale traders while their Kokni co-faithful (from Maharashtra) have specialized in shipping. Zamindar Sikhs, who were initially mercenaries in the British Army, are now in intellectual professions (architects, academics, etc.), but do not forget some of the activities in which the most populous group of the Ramgarhia have already invested, such as public works, the automobile sector, and agro-industry.

Nevertheless, the diversification of activities within each class group, which is independent of the push for upward mobility towards old professional categories, shows that the caste barrier has ceased to be an insurmountable obstacle. Intellectual professions are no longer the preserve of high-ranking castes. Even though it has not yet been possible to clearly explain the persistence of residual old corporate positions, we may suggest that they owe their survival, on the one hand, to comparative advantage gained in sectors that are unique to them, and, on the other, to the mere inertia of succession devolution and acquired situations.

(66) The chapter on socio-religious communities sheds additional light on these professional orientations.

Table 1.6 Community positions in some sectors (without excluding participation by representatives of other communities)⁶⁷

- Advocates, university academicians: Brahman Hindus, Ismailis, Bohra Shia community, Arya Samaj Hindus, Goans, Parsis
- Agro-industry: Sikhs (especially Zamindar), Lohana and Patel Hindus, Ithnasheri Shia
- Architects: Sikhs, Parsis, Kokni Sunnis, Sutar Hindus (“carpenters”)
- Automobile: Sikhs, Ismailis, Bathia Hindus
- Banking, insurance: Ismailis, Oshwal Jains
- Business (cloth): Oshwal Jains, Lohana Hindus, Memon Sunnis
- Business (small-scale): Cutchi Patel Hindus, Oshwal Jains, Sunni Muslim
- Chemicals, plastics, rubber: Oshwal Jains, Ismailis
- Cleaning: Dhobi (“launders”) Hindus
- Clothing (clothing industry and business): Wanza Darji Hindus (“tailors”), Goans
- Doctors: Nayee Hindus (“barbers”), Patel Hindus, Jains
- Electricals and domestic electric appliances (industry): Jains, Kokni Sunnis, Ismailis
- Engineers: Sikhs, Sutar Hindus (“carpenters”)
- Food (industry): Oshwal Jains, Lohana Hindus, Ismailis
- Goldsmith, jewellery: Soni Hindus (“goldsmiths”)
- Hair salons: Nayee Hindus (“barbers”)
- Hardware, sanitary equipment: Bohra Shia community
- Hotel industry: Ismailis
- Large-scale distribution: Oshwal Jains
- Leather: Mochi Hindus (“cobblers”), Ismailis (leather industry)
- Media: Ismailis
- Metal (industry): Oshwal Jains, Patel et Lohana Hindus
- Overseas business: Bohra Shia community, Bathia Hindus
- Paper, packaging: Oshwal Jains, Hindus, Ismailis
- Pharmacy: Jains, Patel Hindus
- Public works: Sikhs, Sutar Hindus (“carpenters”), Bohra Shia community, Kokni Muslims, Cutchi Patel Hindus
- Real estate: Bohra community, Sikhs
- Textile: Oshwal Jains (business), Ithnasheri, Ismailis (production)
- Timber and wood industry: Sikhs, Kokni Sunnis

(67) For details on the community or traditional corporate records, see chapter on socio-religious communities.

The breakdown, at least partially, of community division of labour has had other consequences. In spite of an unquestionable supra-community feeling shared among all representatives of the Indian diaspora – particularly in circumstances of xenophobic threats – a sense of intra-community unity was strongly maintained within each community, as well as the necessities of solidarity among their members. This has led to increased inter-community rivalries that likely fuel disparaging stereotypes. These dissensions are less frequent or less sensitive between large religious “blocs” as within them: even though the Lohanas (considered as a “body”) are commonly opposed to the Jains and the Bohra community (or the Ithnasheri) to Ismailis, there are relatively few examples of prejudice or hostility between Sunni and Shia Muslims and between Hindus and Muslims. This issue will be revisited in the pages below as well as in other chapters of this book.

Maintaining community self-segregation

Kept apart from the British during the colonial period, the Asians of East Africa, on their side, did not spare their efforts to avoid cohabitation with Africans, opting for intra-community sociability, imposing endogamy rules and carefully avoiding certain residential areas. Existing cultural differences between Indians and Africans have always been given as an explanation to these tendencies. Whatever their religious attachment and caste belonging (this issue correctly applies to Hindus and representatives of higher castes), Indians feel repulsion for a certain number of African cultural traits (animal sacrifices, beef consumption, initiation rites or funeral rites, among others). Given that there was already some form of segregation and endogamy within their own communities, Indians – the proponents argued – could only remain in enclosed circles by keeping themselves away from Africans. Regardless of the validity of these comments, the fact is that such a situation was not surprising to Africans in any way since apartheid was already in existence at that time. In fact, Africans suffered the same problems of limited citizenship just like Indians.

If this situation were to be adapted to the present period, the practice of ‘separate development’ would go against the wishes expressed by Africans to end any kind of exclusion. From an Indian-African point of view, the centripetal and protectionist decision taken by all societies could be justified by several reasons: 1) in the eyes of those concerned, it was a way of maintaining cultural identity; 2) it brought social security protection to every community – as a minority – that the state

proved incapable of providing; 3) it would facilitate future community commitment to collective development without harming all citizens.

- a) Residential segregation is the most visible way which people of Indian origin have used in East Africa to stay apart. Nowhere else than in Nairobi is such segregation so visible, and it concerns all statutory and religious sub-groups. Largely confined in the north-eastern part of the city (Parklands and Westlands), Indians share a same territory divided into several communal perimeters which, for some of them, have collective and enclosed housing provided with common services (security, garbage collection, maintenance of lawns, baby sitting, etc.). In such protected areas rarely visited by Africans – apart from domestic workers – Indians live and mix among themselves and visit one another like citizens of a miniature country of their own⁶⁸.

Residential segregation has not been significantly reduced since independence due to the fact that there has been an increasing separation of work places (trade, workshops, etc.) and residential areas. In the three East African capitals, increasing urban insecurity is one of the major factors contributing to this phenomenon: in the first place, urban insecurity leads to the concentration of commercial activities in more secure areas; this intensifies or doubles up other forms of classical social segregation that exist almost everywhere in the world other than Europe. In addition, it leads to the formation of self-sufficient communal ghettos. Few families are able to resist this siege-like mentality⁶⁹.

- b) When the situation allows, residential segregation is worsened by academic segregation. Although the main issue here is to maintain their identity, Indian schools have responded to demands for quality education that is supposed to maintain them at a higher level⁷⁰. These schools are beneficiaries of many grants from their

(68) The current spatial division of communities was introduced in 1948 through an urban planning programme developed by a South African architect (Kapur Dromson 2008: 313). Laurent Nowik gives more concrete information on Indian-Kenyan settlement in Nairobi below.

(69) For historical details about African-Asians in Nairobi, read also Adam (2006: 340-343). Residential segregation is currently taking root in big coastal towns like Mombasa and Dar es Salaam where it was less visible before. The same phenomenon can be seen in Kampala.

(70) However, certain parents are divided between giving the best formal education to their children and incorporating them in their family businesses. The second option prompts children to shorten their studies. In addition, children are forced to learn at least three languages (one Asian language, English and Kiswahili; Arabic is also added to this list for

respective communities. They usually seek recognition from international universities in the United Kingdom, United States of America and Canada without considering the requirements of the national system of education in their host nation. Even though their student populations are limited (all the communities do not have enough students to open schools, which only exist in big towns), their creation responds to a common desire that has strong financial backing. As far as primary and secondary schools are concerned, it is noteworthy that since there is freedom of choice, communities (in particular Muslims) always give priority to girls' schools. They hardly show reluctance in sending boys to schools that do not belong to their own community (these schools must however be Indian)⁷¹. This is the case of the Ithnasheri, who own only one girls' school in Nairobi.

Table 1.7 Schools

1. Hindu schools

- Arya Boys School, Ngara (an average cost friendly school that attracts Arya Samaj Punjabi Hindus)
- Arya Girls School, Ngara (an average cost friendly school that attracts Arya Samaj Punjabi Hindus of)
- Arya Samaj Girls School, Parklands Avenue, Parklands
- Arya Samaj Nursery School, Ngara Road, Ngara
- Brook House Schools, Parklands (Dasa Jain)
- Cutchi Leva Patel School, Nairobi South (Patel)
- Oshwal College, Westlands, a private university institution offering undergraduate degree courses in management and information science. It signed a cooperation agreement with the University of Manchester (Jain)
- Premier Academy, Forest Road, Parklands (Patel)
- Visa Oshwal Boys Secondary School, Mpaka Road, Parklands (Jain)
- Visa Oshwal Girls Secondary School, Parklands (Jain)
- Visa Oshwal School, Mpaka Road, Parklands (Jain)

Muslim students registered in Koranic schools). This explains why some students have learning difficulties. Similar observations were noted among Indians living in Madagascar (Blanchy 1995: 188).

(71) As mentioned further in this text, exceptions are made in favour of certain Anglo-Saxon schools that provide intensive preparation for entry in Anglo-Saxon universities.

2. Muslim schools

- Aga Khan Academy, Parklands (Ismaili)
- Aga Khan High School, Upper Parklands (Ismaili)
- Aga Khan Mixed Primary School, Parklands Avenue, Parklands (Ismaili)
- Aga Khan Nursery School, Ngara (Ismaili)
- Cutchi Gujarati Schools, Ngara Street (Ngara) and Mtama Road (Parklands)
- Jaffery Girls Schools (Ithnasheri)
- Langata Complex (Bohra)
- Madrassa al Rasul, Karen (an Ithnasheri religious school meant for African converts)
- Muslim Girls Secondary School, Park Road, Ngara (of Sunni Punjabi origin)

All Asian-African schools admit students without consideration of their origin or religion. However, a glimpse at students' classes and group photos shows that more than 90% of them are of Indian origin. For instance, according to figures given by the school management, 98% of students in Oshwal Jain Girls Secondary School in Nairobi are of Indian origin. However, the students' religious affiliations are extremely diverse: 30% of them are Muslims in the same Jain school; only 16% are Ithnasheri in Jaffery community school⁷². In her contribution on the Ismaili community, Colette Le Cour Grandmaison explains further why in East Africa the well-to-do families of Indian origin are attracted by the complex school model recently opened in Mombasa by the Ismaili⁷³. It is worth noting that in Nairobi, a major percentage of students registered in Braeburn School (a famous school managed by Americans) come from rich Indian-Kenyan families⁷⁴.

(72) This information was given by Murtaza Somjee, the community chairman. Half of the students admitted at the Ithnasheri school are non-Muslims or without a declared religious affiliation (Hindus, Japanese and Africans).

(73) This complex is the Aga Khan Academy in Mombasa. See the chapter on the Ismaili below. In this particular case, just like in others, the percentage of students belonging to the religious community of reference is below 50%. However, and as shown above, the percentage of students from African families remains low.

(74) Other than Braeburn School, there are also other non-religious affiliation prestigious schools (but run by a teaching staff of Indian origin) that admit all types of students, among them many Kenyan Indians. This is the case of the Nairobi Academy, the Hill Crest

- c) Asian-Africans' passion for a communal way of life is not only limited to housing and education. Anyone who has ever lived in Nairobi knows the existence of Asian hospitals: the Shah Hospital (belonging to the Jain), the Guru Nanak Ramgarhia Sikh Hospital (belonging to the Sikh), and the Aga Khan Hospital (belonging to the Ismailis). Aga Khan and Nairobi hospitals (whose medical personnel is in majority composed of Asian-Africans – 80%), admits a cosmopolitan clientele that is mainly composed of Europeans living in Kenya.
- d) The Asian-African social life, just like a community of newly arrived experts, is shown by their preference for intra-community contacts. The existence of numerous associations attached to religious or corporatist organisations has been already discussed. These include sports clubs, women groups, youth and charity associations, etc. If they do not always engage themselves in their own social circles (or may be due to the need of not strengthening the socio-cultural barriers that isolate them from the rest of the population), Indians also invest in a number of clubs, some of which are of British origin and predate their recent social promotion. In Nairobi, this is the case of the so-called “sports” clubs (in reality they are more social than sports clubs) such as: the Karen Country Club, the Muthaiga Golf Club, the Nairobi Club, the Nairobi Gymkhana, the Parklands Sports Club, etc. Other groups that were recently created are of North-American origin and they include: Lyons, Giants, Round Tables, Rotary (all have a high Hindu participation). Finally, some clubs like the Aga Khan Sports Club, the Goan Gymkhana, the Simba Union Club (Sikhs), etc. are strictly Asian.
- e) Governed by the customs that give preference to intra-community contacts, the social life of families of Indian origin is organised in accordance with a closed mentality that leaves little room for Africans. More interaction is noticeable at family levels and in bigger circles like statutory and religious groups (family meetings, home invitations, religious ceremonies, other associations, etc.). In addition, professional, friendly or social ties (going to the same clubs in particular) exist between representatives of

College, the Peponi College or the Brookhouse College. It is interesting to note that even if the social standard of these institutions is superior to that schools with religious affiliation (due to the social classes of admitted students and the luxury of sports equipment), their secondary school level results are generally lower.

diverse communities, including interaction between Hindus and Muslims⁷⁵.

Relations between Hindus and Muslims have for many decades been characterised by many clashes on the whole sub-continent. However, collective relations between Hindus and Muslims of Indian origin in the diaspora are characterised by friendliness, mutual respect and assistance. A good number of representatives of the Hindu diaspora in Africa belong to marginal religious groups like the Jains, the Sikhs, the Swaminarayan, etc. In rebellion to the caste system, these groups maintain a tradition of tolerance and friendship with Muslims as is traditionally the case with Sikhs. On the other hand, the Ismaili and the Bohra who are largely found in Eastern Africa are symmetrically followers of the same tradition of tolerance.

Beyond the intercommunity rivalries mentioned before, a common social and geographical origin and the existence of a common cultural and linguistic heritage is also a major factor that unifies Asian-Africans of all different kinds of religious affiliation. Given their geographical origin (North – Western states of India or provinces bordering Pakistan), East African Asians usually belong to socio professional groups whose definition (and name like the case of the Cutchi) goes beyond religious borders. The case of the Punjabi group illustrates the situation of these business families that were separated half a century ago by the artificial border that divided Punjab. These people have business and cordial relations with at least three communities (Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs)⁷⁶. Beyond these local and sector rapprochements, and whatever internal differences (essentially statutory or religious) that exist, Asians of diverse origins remain united by adhering to the same big and ancient civilisation whose major components are obvious to all: language (Gujarati for the majority, if not Urdu, Punjabi or Hindi); etiquette and social customs, way of dressing and dishes; most secular rituals (almost all of them are of Hindu origin and are

(75) It is also worth mentioning the existence of several musical groups for the youth. The most famous ones in East Africa are the Rasni Musical Group founded by the Sikh musician Amrik Singh Saund (Indian pop music interpreted in Hindi, Gujarati, Punjabi) and the Bangha Nites group that is led by an Ismaili musician, Shaheed Ali Khan. See the chapter below on families and marriages.

(76) This feeling is well expressed by Rasna Warah, a Kenyan journalist from a Sikh family that originally came from Lahore, a main town of Punjab currently included in Pakistan borders (Warah 1998: 11-12). See also Neera Kapur's book (2008: 408-419 and *passim*).

generally observed by Muslims); almost same statutory prejudices as far as socio-professional categories are concerned; and finally, they always have a common conviction that largely transcends religious belonging. Given that they have the same difficulties due to the fact that they are immigrants and that they have to defend the same rights, the representatives of the diaspora have a feeling that they have a lot in common but little to share with Africans.

Their sense of unity is again increased by the fact that since they have been in the diaspora, all Asian communities are considered by Africans as belonging to one socio-cultural entity. In the eyes of the Africans, who are generally poorly informed about the complex differences that distinguish numerous communal sub groups, the social class of East African Asians (usually described as a privileged class) can only be defended by a strong coalition that is efficient and receives many resources that go beyond religion. The sense of identity that unifies them is based on how they are looked upon by others.

Poor social and political integration

In contrast to the strong integration of Asians in key sectors of national economy, poor relations between them and the Africans is the result of the social gap between the two groups and the segregation policy maintained by communities of Asian origin.

Endogamy represents the culmination or conclusion of a group-centred sociability that is almost inevitable and not very keen to expansion. It is also in line with the internal constraints of the Asian society, whose main features need to be broadly remembered.

As explained further in this book, marital relationships in India are governed by complex rules that organize exogamy in the horizon of endogamy that goes beyond the family levels (except in cases of endogamy at family level that is specific to some Muslims as already mentioned)⁷⁷. Apart from exogamy prescribed to exclude incestuous relations, there are two types of endogamy in India: religious endogamy and caste endogamy. Religious endogamy is general, though nowadays one can witness a few exceptions in liberal circles. As for caste endogamy, it is one of the pillars of marital relationships among Hindus. Although it cannot be openly invoked by Muslims and Sikhs, it is still strictly applied in most families.

(77) See Michel Adam, "Family, family life and marriage..." below.

In the patrilineal and patriarchal context of India, all forms of endogamy may be subject to asymmetric arrangements. The common form of asymmetric marriage is what is called *anuloma*; whereby a man of a higher status marries a woman of a lower status. This explains why a Brahman man who claims patrilineal tradition may be allowed to take as his wife a woman of lower status condition. In the same way, a Muslim will be allowed to marry a non Muslim (considered of lower status, but subject to her conversion to Islam later on). This is because a symmetrical marriage will not be accepted, since it would mean that the Muslim community would lose children born from that marriage. Apart from the *anuloma* marriage, there is also *pratiloma* marriage (an Ego marriage with a woman of higher status) which can be practised occasionally, especially in wealthy families without a male heir.

However, an asymmetrical marriage can only be planned between couples that have a certain social proximity but not between people from different status orders. This explains why there were few, if any such relations between Asians and Africans. In fact, religious differences were another factor that explain why these two groups could not marry one another. As for marriages between Muslims, they theoretically remain possible between couples of the same faith. However, their number remains limited because, on the contrary, Muslims prefer familial endogamy. This practice is still widespread among many faithful that include Asians and Africans. In addition, we examined the functional character of such a marriage in the context of a joint communal family, especially among the Shia.

It is therefore understandable that, whatever their feelings towards Africans, Asians have not been willing to engage in inter-marriage. This conclusion, however, does not apply to all faiths. While mixed marriage was never observed among Hindus who strictly follow Hinduism, cases of inter-racial marriage between Asians and Africans exist among the Sikhs⁷⁸. There is a high incidence of mixed marriages among Muslims, especially in the coastal region. It is actually the issue of religious affinity that contributed to mixed marriages among Muslims. The social dimension is however not completely excluded because a large number of Arab-Swahili families in this region belong to former rich businessmen.

No research has been conducted on the important issue of Indo-African sociability that is represented by inter-racial marriages between

(78) See the chapter on socio-religious communities.

Asian Muslims and Africans. In Mombasa, Zanzibar, Dar es Salaam and in other coastal cities like Malindi and Lamu, there is an unknown number of Indo-Swahili couples, yet several Asian families admitted that they had at least one member of African ancestry in their genealogy. The correlation between frequency of intermarriage and social status seems nevertheless proved. Among the Shias, the Aga Khan Ismailis seem most open to inter-ethnic marriages. This phenomenon is however rare in higher socio-professional categories. As for the Sunnis, the highest proportion of mixed marriages is found among the Badala (secondarily among the Kokni).

Secondly, the existence of male hypergamy implies that children are attached to the paternal lineage and therefore to Indo-African identity especially when it comes to religion. As the book tries to show later, this integration creates difficulties especially outside the coastal areas (where cultural mixtures are old) and in non-Muslim regions of the country.

The low involvement of the Asian diaspora in the country's political life was for a long time testified by collective aloofness by the members of various immigrant communities. We previously reported the battle waged by an intellectual and liberal minority in support of anti-colonial struggle led by Africans. Largely unknown to the masses and largely edged out – as seen previously – through tactical means, this involvement also suffered ups and downs just after independence. Since they were discouraged by xenophobic reactions, members of the Asian diaspora adopted low-profile political positions, while strengthening signs of their commitment to integration (such as the adoption of the citizenship of the host country). This is why in the wake of independence, “Asian” political associations and unions were dissolved. If they had remained in place, people would have suspected that Asians were willing to continue defending purely “ethnic interests”⁷⁹. This wish of removing distinctive statutory identity was however not compensated by an integrative political commitment. In fact, certain personalities of the diaspora never ceased being informally present in corridors of power where they actively played different roles of lobbyists. Thus, some of them were repeatedly compromised in various scandals: illegal financing of political parties, massive tax evasion and smuggling of all kinds. Meanwhile, the Asian community as a whole refused, even in

(79) Reduced to the Kenya Indian Congress, the East African Indian National Congress ceased to exist in 1967. Other associations and sports and youth organisations were also abolished: These include the Railway Asian Union, Indian Trade Union, Indian Merchants Chamber, Asian Sports Association, and the Indian Youth League.

Kenya, any parliamentary participation⁸⁰. On the contrary, with the declared wish of making Asian-Africans recognize that they have the same citizenship as Africans and with the resolution that was affirmed time and again to defend the cause of minority cultures, such political timidity is currently changing for the better especially in Tanzania and Uganda. With a parliamentary representation of six legislators in 2007, the Indo-Tanzanian minority is capable of making its voice heard at the national level.⁸¹ With two strong members of parliament, the Asian voice in Uganda is politically well represented given the fact that its population is low⁸². Kenya is trailing in this area because Asians are only represented by one Member of Parliament, Ahmed Shakeel Shabir, a Punjabi Muslim, former mayor for Kisumu, currently a legislator from Nyanza⁸³. Certain intellectuals of Asian origin played an important role in Kenyan politics without taking sides. That is the case of a well-known lawyer, Professor Yash Pal Ghai (a Punjabi Hindu) who was in charge of the constitutional reform committee a few years ago⁸⁴. During the 2007 elections, several Asian organisations pulled their resources together to mobilize voters. The Hindu Council organised a major civic education campaign among the youth (through radio presentations and public meetings in Indian schools). Being a member of the committee of domestic election observers (Kenya Election Domestic Observation Forum), the Hindu Council also sent observers to many voting stations⁸⁵.

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- (80) In 1963, Jomo Kenyatta proposed to nominate a Minister of Indian origin, but according to a Member of Parliament, Chanan Singh, the representatives of the diaspora failed to agree on the name of the beneficiary (Warah 1998: 31). Up to 1971, Kenya had two legislators of Asian origin named Chanan Singh and Fitz de Souza, the latter being of Goan origin. Before the recent 2007 elections, the only elected Members of Parliament were Krishan Gautama (from 1979 to 1983) and Amin Walji (from 1992 to 1996).
 - (81) Constituencies of Igunga (Rostam Aziz), Kilwa-Kisiwani (Gulamabbas Dewji), Morogoro-Kusini (Sameer Ismail Lotto), Mvomero (Suleiman Ahmed Saddiq), Singida Mjini (Mohamed Gulam Dewji), Zanzibar-Kikwajuni (Parmuth Singh Hoogan).
 - (82) Kampala (Sanjay Tanna), Buganda Kingdom (Rajni Tailor); a councillor in Kampala Municipal Council (Pradip Karia) and a high ranking Ambassador (Nimisha Madhvani, Ambassador in India).
 - (83) In Westlands constituency situated in Nairobi, communities of Indian origin unsuccessfully presented four candidates for this parliamentary seat (1 Ismaili, 2 Hindus, 1 Goan). The same constituency has a councillor of Indian origin: Jaffar Kassam.
 - (84) Chairman of the Constitutional Review Commission.
 - (85) 17,000 out of 27,000 voting stations (information communicated by Rashmin Chitnis, honorary chairman of the Hindu Council). Other Indian organisations like the Ismaili and the Bohra also participated in the work of this Forum.

Unclear relations with India

The past strained relations with the countries of the Indian subcontinent and particularly with India, which had for long impaired the relations between members of the Indian diaspora and the successive governments of the three East African countries, are currently settled. After the partition of India, the new states of the Union of India and Pakistan sent separate ambassadors to Nairobi, the capital of the three main colonies in East Africa. After expressing his sympathy for the movement of African independence, the Indian ambassador had to deal with protests from the British government. The Indian government, on the contrary, adopted an attitude of complete neutrality after independence. "We have made it clear to our people in Africa ... they should neither expect help nor protection from us if they are seeking special rights that are not in the interest of Africans" (Pandit Nehru's statement quoted in Prunier 1990: 116). Then subsequent episodes of heightened tension following the events of 1963 (Zanzibar), 1967 (Kenya) and 1972 (Uganda), relations between the East African states on the one hand, and those of India and Pakistan on the other hand gradually eased over the years. Being emissaries of the Commonwealth and enjoying the status of High Commissioners, Indian and Pakistan ambassadors occupy a high rank in the hierarchy of diplomatic protocols. There are currently several cooperation agreements in education and commerce between India, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania (Indian Technical Economic Cooperation that trains African engineers and technicians in India; India Joint Trade Agreement and the Joint Business Agreement). Although the level of trade remains modest, the Kenyan government also accepted that regular flights run between Mumbai and Nairobi⁸⁶. For its part, the Indian government encourages members of the Indian diaspora to contribute to the development of their countries of origin. Whatever their nationality, people of Asian origin living outside national borders benefit, under Indian law, from a special status called *Non Resident Indian* (NRI)⁸⁷. For most Asian-Africans, however, relations with India are still

(86) In 1996, India was Kenya's fifth exporting country. It was in fact client number one in Africa, far ahead of Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda. On the other hand, Kenya exports little to India. The two countries are competitors in tea, coffee, cotton, sugar and horticultural production. India also has different raw materials and industries at the same time (P.E.I.K. 1997: 13-17).

(87) A person is considered of "Indian origin" when s/he has had an Indian passport or if one of the parents or grandparents is or was of Indian nationality, or if the spouse satisfies one of these conditions (P.E.I.K. 1997: 20). Given the high number of ethno-religious marriages among Indian families, one can actually think that the existence of only one

embarrassing and contradictory, thus revealing persisting difficulties in their identity position.

Without any demographic survey to rely upon, it is currently difficult to quantify the migration flows between India and the East African countries since the time of the first mass population relocation prompted by the British towards the end of the 19th century. There is no statistical information available, either, on the exact proportion of the population of Indian origin living in Africa who had been born outside the country's borders. Given that a significant part of the first immigrants who came to construct the railway went back to India after the railway completion, the majority of today's members of the Indian community have to seek their roots in post-1907 migrations. Taking into account the arrival of spouses "recruited" in India and the recent influx of unregistered immigrants, the proportion of people of Asian origin born in Africa is likely to be at least 50 %.

Even though links with their 'mother' country may have been cut for a long time, every Asian-African dreams of visiting the place of his/her ancestors at least once in his/her lifetime. The trip to the Indian subcontinent is a major goal for all families, though its accomplishment is however not affordable for people from humble backgrounds. Most families go to Gujarat and sometimes extend to Maharashtra and Punjab. The trip, undertaken like a pilgrimage, frequently results in disappointment however. Indeed, due to the separation of families that occurred in India since the time of the earliest migrations, most immigrants do not have good kinship networks that can give them a warm reception that mirrors their expectations. Although some may be proud to display their economic success, this does not usually last because the larger family circles consider it usurped or improperly acquired. For some, the poverty levels they witness in their places of origin make them leave quickly and it is at times the reason why they never go back. Only the perspective of university education attracts candidates to stay in India for long, though those who can afford usually give preference to English-speaking universities of the West⁸⁸.

ascendant of Indian origin actually means exclusive Indian ascendancy. 18 million N.R.I. enjoy certain banking and financial facilities in the former metropolis (rights of having foreign accounts, good interest rates, tax exemptions on investments in India). It is estimated that the Indian diaspora (East Africa, Middle East, South East Asia, Australia, Great Britain, West Indies, United States, and Canada) is the largest in the world.

- (88) Figures gathered by the author varied according to the number of people interviewed (Hindu Council, Indian High Commission in Kenya). In 2002, there were about 5,000 to 10,000 Indian-Kenyan students registered in Indian universities, the highest university

In line with keeping caste endogamy, another reason for travelling to India is the search for suitable spouses, especially women. The earlier existence of this ancient practice, as mentioned above, is meant to expand, in the small demographic context of immigration and for each endogamous community, the circle of permitted spouses. The period between December and February is dedicated to this search. In Gujarat, Hindu families have contacts with Brahmins who are responsible for coming up with lists of young girls to marry. Although the demographic decline of certain emigrant communities has made it difficult, in Africa, to have marriage negotiations that conform to traditions (the most common norms being isogamy or hypergamy, as mentioned previously), most sources are unanimous that the number of spouses recruited from India has significantly declined over recent years. Such is notably the case with less prosperous communities – especially the Sunni Muslims – which, for most of them, have severed their links with the motherland and whose frequency of travelling to India is the lowest, some of their community members having in fact never left the African continent. This is also the case with the minority of rich upper-class families in which, as seen before, a growing number of marriages no longer respect traditions. Women meant for distant marriages, on their side, are now rare in India, except those destined for European countries⁸⁹.

The growing decline of interpersonal relations with places of origin is in sharp contrast to the high attachment given to the Indian culture, whose mainstay remains the former homeland according to all immigrants.

Everyone knows of the tragic partition of India in 1947 that led to the breakup of the former Indian Empire and shook the political balance in the subcontinent. This breakup, which strongly affected Africa, brought about sharp conflicts between Hindus and Muslims, notably in Kenya⁹⁰.

registration figure in all universities (according to the same sources, Great Britain, the United States and Canada admit around 3,000 students in total). The high numbers in India can be explained by the fact that fees and living costs are low and yet the quality of education is excellent (about 3,200 € per year in India as opposed to an average of 23,000 € per year in the United States). The same reason explains why many Indian Africans of the middle class choose to seek medical treatment in India and in fact visit India regularly for this purpose.

(89) See the chapter on family and marriages.

(90) News of massacres rapidly reached the African colonies and stirred up passions: after separating from Hindus and Sikhs, Indian Muslims asked for a specific representation in the legislative council (LegCo) from the British in 1947. For more details, see Seidenberg (1983: 50-74). It is worth noting that Apa Pant and Nawab Sadiq Ali, new Indian and Pakistan ambassadors in Nairobi, made significant efforts to stop inter-community resentments (Kapur Dromson 2008: 312).

For the majority of Asian-Africans, this event did not erase the feeling depicted above that their roots are embedded in the same place. That is why families from the regions currently administered by Pakistan still see the Indian confederation as one entity. It is therefore no wonder that one of the missions of Indian ambassadors is to perpetuate this vision since it is expected of them to permanently revive the cultural identity of the diaspora. Located in the heart of Nairobi, with an impressive library, the main cultural service of the Indian High Commission in Kenya is to organise intercultural exchanges like: Indian languages teaching (with emphasis on Hindi which provides access to classical and contemporary literature), fellowship programs, dancing and drama festivals⁹¹, music recitals, conferences, etc. On these occasions, community associations invite artists, intellectual or religious personalities from India. The considerable affluence that goes with these events bears witness to the passion with which diverse cultural aspects of the former homeland are welcomed in Africa⁹². These “*masala* cultures” – a term used as a parody to designate the local diaspora sub-cultures in all countries where there are Indian immigrants – are maintained through such renewed exchanges⁹³.

Another feature that shows that Asian-Africans are worried about a possible shift from their canon or authentic culture of origin is proved by the way they pray. Religion is in fact considered a privileged conservatory of tradition. Since they are very keen on passing this tradition to their children (who are usually very present in religious structures), Asians in the African diaspora have proved to be very strict with religion. This is strengthened by the importance of numerous religious associations. Just like the Brazilian settlers who imported carved facades for their churches from Portugal in the sixteenth century, several religious associations ordered entire temples from India in detached pieces (this is the case of the big and beautiful Swaminarayan temple in Nairobi that was recently

(91) Particularly from the town of Baroda (Gujarat), a famous artistic centre.

(92) Another sign of attachment to cultural productions from India. In 1988, according to a study carried out on Sikh women, 56.3% of them watched an Indian film at home between one and three times per week (Gurwitz 1988: 120). The presence of “rockets” is a factor of additional rapprochement with the daily life of the former metropolis. In the area of Diamond Plaza in Nairobi (associated with rockets), one can buy Indian dailies, call and send faxes to India late in the day, etc.

(93) See Singaravelou (2003: 24). The expression “*masala* culture” comes from an assortment of spices that are used in making certain curries. It was known during the release of *Mississippi masala*, a film by Mira Nair, an Indian film director from Kerala.

built along a busy avenue)⁹⁴. These practices cost a lot of money but believers of different religious affiliation never hesitate to support them. Without noticing that they at times do the same thing to their religious buildings, Asian Muslims make fun of those oversized temples that are built by Hindus at the entrance of major cities⁹⁵.

Uncertain future for the middle class

The economic and social upheavals currently experienced in East Africa (reorientation of international investment and exports, growing competition from Southern Africa and Asian countries) exert dissimilar pressures on various categories of the Asian diaspora. In the category of small and medium sized businesses (retailers of fabrics and house wares, not to say *dukawallah*), many people are suffering from the market pressure brought about by newcomers in the retail trade: Africans of various origins (Kikuyu, Luo, Somali) as well as Chinese. While some people, according to their Asian-African rivals, benefit from preferential treatment obtained from government officers after bribing them (patent waivers, cancellation or reduction of customs duties and tax grabs, fraud on social legislation, etc.), the others, sometimes suspected of violating the same regulations (especially fraudulent importation), are accused of unfair business practices: selling below the cost price, distribution and sale of second hand clothes at very low cost (*mitumba*), etc.⁹⁶

In general, especially in Kenya, retailers, wholesalers and small manufacturers complain about lack of a national development policy, particularly for poor and middle class Africans. This is a prerequisite for the growth of domestic demand that is necessary for commercial prosperity. While denouncing the extremes of emphasis on “tourism and agricultural export” (particularly in the area of fruits and vegetables and flowers in which, many Asian-Africans are largely shareholders),

(94) In other cases (the old Oshwal temple on Oshwal Road in Pangani and other Hindu temples in Kampala), stones were imported (ochre sandstone from Rajasthan) and sculptures made on site by Muslim artists who specifically came from India for this purpose. In northern India, most stone sculptors are Muslim.

(95) Other than religious circles, the Ismaili built several prestigious buildings in Kenya like the Rahamtullah Trust in Upper Hill area of Nairobi or the Aga Khan Academy in Mombasa, described in this book by Colette Le Cour Grandmaison. Even among the Oshwal Jain community of Nairobi, there are many criticisms regarding cultural and religious buildings along Ring Road, whose cost is said to have exceeded 500 million shillings in 2003 (7.6 million euros).

(96) See the chapter on relations between Africans and the representatives of communities of Indian origin. *Mitumba* is a Swahili word that originally meant “bundles” (or “belongings”). Though very restricted in Tanzania, its importation led to widespread protests from manufacturers and businessmen from the formal sector.

these same businessmen and manufacturers are demanding a reduction in energy costs, an increase in domestic production of cereals, sugar and cotton, and the establishment of free zones, etc.⁹⁷

Challenges and future of integration

In the first place, Asian-Africans are working hard to reject the accusation that they keep Africans away. They believe that their integration efforts have however been poorly rewarded. After giving up citizenship of their mother countries and acquiring that of the host country, they are also demanding the same attributes and rights: the right to security of their property, adherence to constitutional principles, tolerance vis-à-vis other communities, participation in duties of common interest. As proof of their adherence to these principles, members of the Asian diaspora argue that they usually mix with Africans whom they agree portray them in the most positive light in public. These statements overlook the fact that relations with Africans are hierarchical and limited. Given the division of community work, there are few circumstances and situations in which Asians within the same institution work with Africans on an equal footing. Except in very rare cases of a few senior officials (or those from some hospitals already mentioned), there is no example of a situation where Asians are subordinate to Africans.

Loyal to their countries of adoption and governments (to which they make declarations of allegiance), and seeking to improve their public image among Africans, Asian-Africans are heavily engaged from their point of view, to solidarity with the underprivileged. Being the main taxpayers, they highlight the involvement of Asian organizations in the national development effort. As a philanthropic foundation, it is true that the Aga Khan Foundation is involved in important assistance programs, preventive health care and welfare. On a smaller scale (especially in comparison to the number of its members), the Hindu Councils are also involved in several educational campaigns and charity work: supporting schools, demonstrating solidarity with the affected families during famines, floods, fires in slums, epidemics, the fight against AIDS, etc. Despite media campaigns conducted by the daily press (especially the

(97) In 2006, Kenya received about 1.8 million tourists, most of them residing in coastal seaside complexes. The contribution of tourism to the national economy represented in the same year was 56.2 billion shillings (about 620 millions euros), or about 12.7% of the GDP (Gross Domestic Product). Tourism is also the source of salaried employment (*Tourism Industry in Kenya* 2007: 1). Tanzania received 800,000 tourists, out of which 100,000 to Zanzibar. It is worth recalling that several families of Indian origin are major players in this business sector.

daily newspaper *The Daily Nation* controlled by the Aga Khan as seen before), these activities largely remain unknown to Africans, although the amounts involved are relatively modest as compared to the resources of Africans.

As already mentioned, Asian-Africans envision a national ideal that respects multicultural differences so as to justify their communal options. Like all ethnic groups in the country – some of them being threatened to lose their identities today – Asian-Africans are claiming protection of their traditional culture. As their spokesmen argue, *Asian-Africans* (an autonym that describes African citizens of Indian origin) are entitled to be respected for their cultural and linguistic attributes. According to them, maintaining the cultural diversity unique to each state in Africa is far much more necessary because, having been colonized, they do not offer a model of national culture apart from the one promoted by the British – but unanimously rejected⁹⁸.

Without excluding their hypothetical combination, two perspectives are emerging today for the Asian diaspora in East Africa:

- a) The first possibility is that of redeployment, which can be traced through the establishment of transnational networks. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Indian families have for a long time followed the examples of other diaspora in that they practise the policy of spreading their members and heritage in several countries based on internal solidarity *ethos*. This *modus operandi* is well known to all analysts of financial and commercial networks and it has many advantages: reduction of economic devastation based on pogrom assumptions, expulsion or even simple business failure, ensuring the rapid withdrawal of capital, diversifying complementary activities in the same branch or in the same industry, facilitating the export policy of an industrial firm, etc. Across East Africa, the effectiveness of these networks is intensified by the transnational nature of organizations (some organizations such as Lohanas publish a directory that gives names, addresses and even the blood group of all members settled in East Africa). As a consequence of multiple changes in the diaspora over the past half-century, the international dispersion of families of Asian origin somehow thrives on its own; the presence of Indian colonies in the new country of emigration, thus encouraging new departures – as is

(98) This opinion is mainly expressed by Rasna Warah (1998: 52).

the case today for Canada and increasingly for Australia⁹⁹. And this strangely leads to the creation of new community tropisms: Ismailis in Canada (especially Vancouver Province), Hindus in Australia, and Muslims in Britain and the Middle East. Facilitated by a multilingual education, the frequent acquisition of multiple passports and the presence of many Asian communities in the five continents, the prospect of new settlement is partly also the consequence of predictable pursuit of university education abroad. Trained in other Commonwealth countries (Britain, Canada and Australia) or the United States, members of the new generation are often encouraged to stay there, preferring the risk of expatriation to those of returning to their countries. Their motives are many: fascination with the western world, marriage on the spot with a foreign spouse, desire to affirm their vocation rather than follow the paternal way of life, desire to escape from the often oppressive guardianship of the family members, mistrust vis-à-vis the economic and political future of Africa, etc. Forming a “migratory chain” of multiple steps (Singaravelou 2003), these expatriations benefit, to some extent, the Asians who remain in Africa (especially where expatriates run activities that complement those of their relatives). As already mentioned before, one should not imagine that the new immigration from India would compensate for the exodus of the younger generation as the redeployment movement would eventually lead to a serious decline of the Asian-African population in the region.

The propensity for secondary migration obviously varies according to communities and social conditions, but such differences are difficult to measure. In general, one can say that families that are less motivated to leave their host country are at the two extremes of the social spectrum. If the owners of successful businesses have no desire to leave their host country (the youth may in turn rely on the prospect of inheritance), it is the same for the poorest families, but for very different reasons (no available resources to prepare for departure, no prospects abroad,

(99) However, migratory mobility is sometimes limited to trips within the three East African countries, an option that does not involve much financial, cultural and emotional constraint. That is why in Kenya, where there were political disturbances in 2007-2008, certain members of the diaspora expressed worries and some of them opted to settle in Tanzania, a peaceful and politically stable country. Regions near the Kenyan border like Arusha or Mwanza (not far from Rwanda and Burundi also) are among the most preferred by the immigrants.

no relationship network). At the collective level, communities that currently seem to be more stable are the Sunni Muslims, the Bohras and the Sikhs.

- b) Without denying the cosmopolitan nature of family ties and their economic interests, activists of Asian origin are currently working for civic integration in Africa. Belonging to the intellectual and liberal groups of the bourgeoisie (scholars, lawyers, industrialists, etc.), these groups are generally from religious minority: Ismailis, reformed Bohras, Hindu dissenters, Parsis, etc. Without a declared political attachment and forming simple group relations or informal associations, they represent a democratic trend in which several issues meet that mobilize a certain international leftist, liberal, humanist and reformist thinking: human rights and promotion of women, protection of ethnic minorities, moralization of economic behaviour (fight against corruption, tax compliance, etc.), environmental protection. Displaying their identity as citizens, they intend to speak on behalf of their citizens in general and not on behalf of Asian-Africans in particular. They facilitate various cultural and civic campaigns (they are notably responsible for the exhibition “The Asian-African Heritage” presented in Nairobi in 2000–2001), and also intend to promote reconciliation between Asians and Africans, particularly marriage behaviour – some of them actually giving the example of intermarriage. Without being prejudicial to their future, these actions still find little resonance among Africans.

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All the authors who contributed to this book are indebted to the study carried out by Cynthia Salvadori in 1983, entitled *Through Open Doors. A View of Asian Cultures in Kenya* (reedited in 1989). It is a detailed and unequalled synthesis dedicated to the history as well as cultural and religious characteristics of communities of Indian origin in Kenya.

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Panorama of Socio-Religious Communities¹

Michel ADAM

Little India or *Little Bombay*: the nickname given to one of the shopping malls frequented by the Indo-African communities living in Nairobi is a concentration of the socio-cultural reality of the diaspora, but whose contents are ignored and its extraordinary complexity concealed. Frequently perceived from the outside as uniform – in general opposing contrast to the African people – people of Indian origin are present, as seen from the inside, as an informal confederation tree made up of multiple autonomous and highly compartmentalized sub-groups within which religious, statutory, professional and regional identities are intertwined.

Table 2.1

Hindus	
Brahmins	1,500
Kshatriya Rajput	100
Lohana (“traders”)	5,500
Bathia (“ship brokers”)	200
Patel (“traders”, former farmers)	20,000
(including Swaminarayan)	(1,000)

(1) This chapter lists, updates and expands information previously published by the author in 2004 in *Cahiers d’Afrique de l’Est* (Adam 2004).

Bhoi ("transporters")	50
Wanza Darji ("tailors")	1,000
Gurjar Sutar ("carpenters")	130
Dhobi ("laundry workers")	500
Mochi ("cobblers")	245
Nayee ("barbers")	400
Luhar ("blacksmiths")	50
Soni ("goldsmiths")	700
Kumbhar ("potters")	500
Punjabi Arya Samaj	
(regional religious group opposed to castes)	1,500
Maharashtra Mandal (regional group)	400
Hindu dissidents	
Jains	16,000
(including Oshwal)	(12,000)
Sikhs	8,00
Sunni Muslims	
Balutchi ("soldiers")	150
Cutchi	
(Badala, Kumbhar, Luhar, Hajam, Dhobi)	7,500
Kokni ("sailors")	400
Memon ("traders")	5,000
Punjabi	10,000
Shia Muslims	
Ismailis (nizaris)	10,000
Bohra	6,500
Ithnasheri	3,500
Parsis	50
Christians	2,000

Source: author's survey

As was mentioned in the introductory chapter, the numerical dissociations in religious representations between India and East Africa (strong over-representation of Muslims and of schismatic organizations of all affiliation). Today, risen to 35% in Kenya and Uganda (an increase compared to the situation before), the proportion of Muslims is about 40% in Tanzania (unchanged compared to the situation before)².

Table 2.2 Religious affiliations of the Indian populations in Uganda (1948)³

Hindus	58.3%
Muslims	31.8% (including a Shia majority)
Sikhs	4.4%
Goan Catholics	4.4%
Jains	1.1%

Table 2.3 Religious affiliations of the Indian populations in Tanzania (1963)⁴

Hindus	50%
Sikhs	10%
Ismailis	15%
Other Muslims, Goans, Parsis	25%

The Hindus

Making up between 55 and 60% of the population of Indian origin, the Hindus are represented in each of the three East African countries by a Hindu National Council, an example of a unifying characteristic of situations in the diaspora (but unimaginable in India). The Hindu Councils bring together the orthodox Hindus (Sanathan Dharma), members of the common Hindu minorities (Arya Samaj, Swaminarayan, etc.) and other religious groups derived from the Hindu branch (Jains and Sikhs). Within the Hindu Orthodox group, there are fifteen organizations corresponding to the main castes and are nominally designated by vernacular autonyms. As is the case in India, these socio-

(2) Because there are no exhaustive reviews, these are rough estimates in the case of Uganda and Tanzania. See the chapter by Laurent Nowik below.

(3) According to Prunier (1990: 63).

(4) According to Prunier (1990: 240) (estimates).

professional statutory categories (*jati* or *gnati*) are frequently associated with regional origins, or are subdivided in accordance with this last criterion⁵. Being very few in Africa, considering their great numbers in India (several thousand as mentioned elsewhere), the *gnati* often have some religious peculiarities (cults associated with elective or regional divinities, loyalty to particular *gurus*)⁶. Being sometimes tied to outdated or obsolete forms of worship (that is to say neglected or abandoned in India), they nevertheless get along very well with the reformist organizations whose main doctrine is most often the rejection of castes.

It is known that the principle of hereditary specialization is one of the pillars of the caste system and has been the subject of considerable distortion. Though India does, in this respect, give many examples of collective mobility, examples of individual mobility are, however, much less frequent. When these changes in status operate from the bottom up, they are frequently accompanied by a distortion of genealogy intended to conceal the infringement of the rule of inheritance (Bouglé 1969:11-26). Thanks to the professional restructuring undertaken at the beginning of the last century and the promotion of education among new generations, the context of immigration offered Indians in Africa highly favourable conditions for this mobility, at the same time allowing them to play amnesia games on their origins. This may explain the unusually high proportion of statutory groups claiming patrician descent (Kshatriya, Brahmin, and Vaishya at the least) and the general challenge of finding members of less honourable statutory groups (Sudra), including representatives from castes of servants (laundry workers, cobblers, etc.)⁷.

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- (5) The term *gnati* (Gujarati) is generally used in East Africa in preference to *jati* (Hindi) to mean caste. It is frequently associated with – and occasionally replaced by – the noun *Vanik* (regional association) or more simply by the terms *panchayat*, *mandal*, *sabha*, *samaj* or *sanstha* (association), which can sometimes mean something other than *gnati*.
 - (6) Hindus from Gujarat show a special devotion to Amba Devi (the “mother goddess”), also known as Ambika (“The Mother”).
 - (7) In India, the number of Hindus belonging to the “lower” status represents about 85% of the total population (“untouchables”: 15%, *Sudras*: 70%) while the number of “superior” *varna*, also called “twice-born” (Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas), does not exceed 15% (2% of whom are Brahmins and barely 1% are *Kshatriya*). In East Africa, the share allocated to the same *varna* “superiors” has probably reached 75%. A common means to reconstruct origins involves tracing the origins of one’s lineage in one of the northern provinces of India where the proportion of the upper castes is higher than anywhere else (Rajasthan, Punjab or even Kashmir where almost all the Hindus have the status of Brahmins).

All community associations (which also apply to non-Hindus) form miniature governments drawing their resources from the contributions of their members and offering them various services in return: religious, social, hospitals, schools, etc.⁸ Hindus have more than one hundred and fifty temples in East Africa and dozens of community homes and schools. Among the most significant Hindu communities (or those allied to the Hindus) are the Lohanas and the Patels (Vaishya castes), as well as the Jains and the Sikhs (Hindu dissidents). Although a tiny minority in numbers, other communities of dissidents (Arya Samaj and Swaminarayan) exert great economic and religious influence. In an almost reversed order, the associations bringing together representatives of the higher castes (Brahmins and *Kshatriyas*) today have more modest resources, in proportion to those of their members, causing them to lose much of their aura.

The **Brahmins** represent about 2% of India's population (20 million people) and about 1.3% of Kenyan Hindus, that is to say approximately 1,300 people (the figures for Uganda and Tanzania are not known). The Brahmins are divided into many castes, three of which are mainly represented in East Africa: the *Shuklas* (officiating priests), the *Bhattis* (astrologers), the *Upadheyas* (scribes, accountants, etc.). Aware of the irreplaceable nature of their duties and being very much attached to their status, the Brahmins of East Africa formed several associations (Brahma Sabha) at the beginning of the last century and have their own temples⁹. Besides the role of priesthood (*pujari* or *shastri*) remunerated by various offerings and more or less fixed honoraria (*daskina* or *dakshina*), the Brahmins – with the exception of the more impure jobs (tanner, laundry worker, grave digger, etc.) – are allowed to practice a virtually unlimited number of professions: teacher, lawyer, journalist, civil servant, soldier, businessman, or even farmer and artisan. The nature of “permanent purity” with which they are endowed allows them to preserve themselves

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- (8) Unlike the Shia Ismailis or the Bohras, the Hindus and the Jains generally do not pay regular annual subscriptions, but make prompt donations to the communities to which they belong.
- (9) In Hindu worship and even in other Indian religions, the necessity to involve the Brahmins lies in the fact that, being endowed with a kind of “inner purity” (that is to say that they are only affected by “external impurity”, which they can easily get rid of by basic cleansing practices), they are the only ones who can engage in some daily ritual acts necessary for communal life (invocations, mantras, sacrifices). This need is all the more strengthened in the context of expatriation, which exposes migrants to frequent occasions of uncleanness, prohibited in the Vedic, as already quoted elsewhere. In addition to daily rituals there are of course more important ceremonies such as rites of passage. This is what explains the relatively high proportion of Brahmins in the diaspora from the earliest days of colonization.

– and those around them – from contacts considered “pollutants”¹⁰. This is how, some Brahmins descending from poor families in Gujarat settled in Kenya, first as pastry chefs, restaurateurs and chefs, offering their clients (or patrons) a mark of purity. Although these professions have been retained by some, most of the Brahmins belonging to those old families are now pursuing academic, legal or financial careers. Contrary to popular belief, however, within East Africa there are only a few great ruling families of Brahmin ancestry¹¹. As for the careers of the priesthood – which are declining in prestige, and fetch very little income – they are completely ignored by the Creole families and are almost entirely occupied by recent immigrants from India. Coming from penniless families, these priests of the temples are moreover less educated. Leading a restricted social life (many of them do not speak English and even less Swahili), they must be content to live on the honoraria paid during the occasions of great ceremonies (weddings, funerals), even simple charitable donations (*daskshina*), attendance at temples having been on a sharp decline¹² almost everywhere. In principle every Hindu community has its own officiating priests, who are not interchangeable as might be the case with priests belonging to the Catholic religion.

Strictly endogamous and very proud of their origins, the **Kshatriya Rajputs** consider themselves the only true *Kshatriyas* in East Africa, several *gnatis* – including those of modest means – having also claimed a similar origin. Forming a minority of about one million people in Rajasthan, from where they originate, they say, according to Cynthia Salvadori, that they are the descendants of the Huns who invaded India in the fifth century AD (Salvadori 1989: 111)¹³. The Rajputs frequently

(10) This principle known as “infiltration” which allows a Brahmin to rid himself of the effect of impure contact by means of appropriate rituals actually applies to all individuals. A representative of any caste may occasionally engage in impure domestic tasks without compromising his status. It is even possible to imagine that he permanently compromises himself by practicing an impure activity (such as automotive repair business) provided that he most often keeps himself away from impure gestures. Agehananda Bharati compares this situation to the Europeans’ engaging in DIY activities during the weekend (Bharati 1972: 70).

(11) In Kenya, we can name Jani (CFC Life Heritage) and Rawal (Devki Steel Works).

(12) Besides some non-Hindu minorities – like the Shia Ismaili Muslims – who have ceased in recent years to use the services of the Brahmins in some of their ceremonies like weddings (see below in this chapter and the chapter on the Ismailis), other minorities who are not strictly Hindu – such as the Sikhs – have also reduced the participation of the Brahmins in their rituals.

(13) The number of the *Kshatriyas* is less than 1% of India’s total population, slightly less than 10 million people.

add the suffix *Sinh* to their name (variant of *Singh* or *Sikh* meaning “lion”). A metaphorical endonym also adopted by all Sikhs, this name brings confusion in the identities of the two community groups. Former railroad workers, and belonging to the small minority of those who chose to remain in Africa, many Rajputs settled in the area of Nakuru (Kenya) to practice businesses of all kinds, an activity that is permitted to *Kshatriyas* in situations of need. Numbering a few thousands (2000?) at the end of the colonial period, many *Kshatriyas* left Africa in the early years of independence. Today reduced to a small number (between 100 and 200 people, of whom a small colony still lives in Nakuru), the Rajput families in East Africa are neither among the most powerful nor the wealthiest, but they strongly assert the will “to not demean themselves”. As we have seen in other cultural contexts - and just like the old Brahmin families - they maintain the obsessive attention to ensure that their children get a first-class education, usually at the cost of expensive expatriation.

Forming the third *varna* of “the reborns” (*dvija*), and minorities in India (about 13% of the population), the *Vaishyas* are, if we believe them, the representatives of all the *gnatis* and represent the totality of the East African Orthodox Hindus, Brahmins and *Kshatriyas* put aside. They are divided into a dozen castes, many of which claim, as we said a little earlier, Brahmin or *Kshatriya* ancestries. Such is the case of the **Lohanas**, a large trading community originally from Gujarat (about 10,000 people in East Africa according to community associations), who have become one of the most prosperous among the Hindu statutory groups. Descending from textile traders settled in Zanzibar, the Lohanas today control large industrial and commercial establishments (food, textiles, hotels)¹⁴. Such is still the case for the **Patels** (also known as Patidar), probably the most significant and one of the best known Indian statutory groups in East Africa. Claiming remote *Kshatriya* origins, the Patels are actually former farmers of Gujarat and Cutch, converted to civil servants by the Mughal administration and reemployed in the same capacity by the British. While the Lohanas have old ties with the African coast, the Patels are more recent immigrants, appreciated by the colonial administration because of their knowledge of English. The present community consists of descendants of an original community which was quite diverse: former beneficiaries of Kenyan farmers (as was

(14) Among the wealthy families of this community there are: Chande (textiles) Daruda (food industry), Madhvani (food industry), Nattwani (steel), Sanghani (plastics, tourism agencies), Somaya (former Delphis Bank, stationery), Suru Tana (printing).

reported a few pages back), junior civil servants of the colony; skilled artisans (especially masons); owners of several shops (*dukawallah*), to the point of borrowing the nickname. With at least 40,000 people in East Africa (20,000 in Kenya), the Patels are divided into two main communities of uneven ranks: the Kaira Leva Patels, minorities of higher status (originating from the Kathiawar region) and the Cutchi Leva Patels, by far the most numerous. At the same time as they were giving up their occupation of shopkeepers, many of the Patels were securing their economic advancement (as public works contractors, industrialists, bankers). While the Kaira Patels are all orthodox Hindus, the Cutchi Patels are mostly followers of the Swaminarayan sect, itself progressive and puritan¹⁵. Reconnecting, somehow, with their rural origins, several Cutchi Patel families recently turned towards agro-industrial activities (sugar, horticulture), particularly in Kenya¹⁶. Like other Indo-African communities, the Patels have not given up their traditions, while at the same time displaying their social success in clubs and other social circles. Public rumour also has it that they are significantly involved in Freemasonry¹⁷.

By far numerically fewer, the other orthodox Hindu *gnati* are more marked by their corporate career orientation (Bhatia: “maritime traders” Bhoi: “carriers” Wanza Darji: “tailors” Gurjar: “carpenters”; Luhar: “blacksmiths” Dhobi: “laundry workers” Soni: “goldsmiths” Mochi: “cobblers” Nayee: “barbers” Kumbhar: “Potters”). Provided from the outset – except for the Bhatias – with a lesser status, they have not achieved the fame of the Lohanas and the Patels. As will be discussed a little further, their socio-economic advancement has also been slower. Scattered over the vast East African territory, some groups have reached critical numerical thresholds (less than 100 people), rendering the perpetuation of community life difficult (Bhoi, Gurjar Sutar, Luhar)¹⁸.

There are several dissident Hindu organisations in East Africa. Three of them have numerous adherents and play a major role in the social life of the immigrant communities. Coming into existence around 1870 in

(15) Many Cutchi Patels live quite modestly in unpretentious homes.

(16) See the introductory chapter.

(17) Among the Patel families with substantial interests in the East African economy are the names of D. Medjee (food), V. and B. Patel (pharmaceuticals), and R. Patel (metal industry, stationery).

(18) Besides the various caste associations, there are, as noted earlier, purely regional associations like Maharashtra Mandal (involving Hindus from Maharashtra) and Shree Sanatan Dharma Sabha (association of Punjabi Hindus), both characterized by the relatively high status of their members (engineers, architects, doctors, teachers). For details on all the Hindu communities established in Kenya, see Adam (2004:1-39).

Bombay and presenting itself as a revival of the original Vedic religion, the **Arya Samaj** dissidence asserts monotheistic beliefs, practices a reduced and iconoclast worship, challenges the prejudices of caste and the fate of women in ancient Hindu tradition (early marriages, prohibition of widow remarriage, etc.). Popular in Punjab and among intellectuals (8 million followers in India), the Arya Samaj featured among the main supporters of Gandhi in the 1940s. Although they are now affected by a nationalist drift towards xenophobic tendencies in India, they still have many followers in the diaspora, particularly in the United States. Having been part of the colonial administration staff in Kenya, their numbers in East Africa reached at least 15,000 people just before independence. Their numbers have since dropped significantly, probably not exceeding 2,000 people at the end of the twentieth century. Bringing together a majority of Punjabi Hindus (teachers, lawyers, doctors, etc.), they defend progressive political views, but keep away from other liberal minority groups (Ismailis, reformed Bohras, Parsis), more engaged in dialogue with the Africans¹⁹.

The **Swaminarayan**, who appeared in Gujarat in the early nineteenth century, is another dissident Reformist movement, equally active in East Africa where it probably has thousands of followers, especially among the Cutchi Patels. Less radical than the Arya Samaj (no questioning of polytheism, no speeches about liberating women), the Swaminarayan faithful preach equality among castes and defend principles from moderate puritanism to conservative resonance (strict vegetarianism, separation of sexes in public places). Today, given their significant resources, having, like the Arya Samaj, spread to Britain and the United States, the Swaminarayan are known for the splendour of their temples (Nairobi, Kampala, and Mombasa).

A contemporary of Buddhism – and in many respects similar to it in terms of doctrine –, **Jainism** is not strictly speaking a reformist dissent, but a religion in itself, claiming however its ties with Hinduism, with which it still shares many doctrinal and ceremonial traits. Appearing in the fifth century BC, but probably based on much older traditions, Jainism rejects the principle of a creator god and objects to the existence of castes, all while retaining the archetype of reincarnation.

More than the Buddhists, the Jains have developed an ascetic philosophy of the mastery of passions and the ideal of respect for all

(19) In Kenya, several Arya Samaj leaders had nevertheless backed the African nationalist organizations in the years before independence (Ombongi 1993:142-161).

life, a correlate of non-violence (*ahimsa*)²⁰. Somehow predisposed to intellectual and business professions (other professions are more exposed to risks that can put any life in danger), the Jains embraced the careers of traders and financiers very early. In the seventeenth century, several of them were already lending to the Mughal rulers. Having lived in East Africa for several centuries (especially in Zanzibar), they quickly formed one of the largest and one of the richest Indian communities of the colonial era.

The Jain community, which has been declining steadily over the past decade, has approximately 15,000 people in Kenya, but probably not more than 10,000 people in Tanzania and Uganda²¹. Called Bania or Banian in the colonial chronicles (from Gujarati *banya* or *vaniya*: "Merchant"), the Jains are more frequently referred to by the (non-derogatory) nickname of Shah, this surname, incidentally belonging to some Muslim families from northern India, is widespread within their group. They are divided into two numerically unequal regional groups (*Vanik*): the Oshwals (the greater majority) and the Navnats.

Having initially originated from the town of Oshia (Rajasthan), the Oshwals then migrated to the region of Jamnagar (Gujarat) where they curiously converted to agriculture. Of the 70,000 people who now make up this small community, only half remained in India (part of whom live in the Bombay region), the rest have been dispersed across the United States (20,000), Canada (5,000) England and East Africa. Initially settling along the coastal areas of East Africa (Zanzibar and Mombasa), the Oshwals then settled in the central province of Kenya and in the towns served by the railway line (Nakuru, Eldoret, Kisumu, Kampala). Very quickly, the Oshwals acquired a dominant position in the textile trade where they competed with the Lohanas²². From the 1930s, some of the Oshwals converted to tin trade, an area that soon became their virtual monopoly. Subsequently, some of the most prosperous industrial

(20) The Jains recognize three levels of liberation: of ordinary believers, of monks (*sadhu*), of spiritual guides (*tirthanker*). The *tirthankers* are represented by animals (such as bulls, snakes, marine conches, etc.) and by specific colours (yellow, black, blue, etc.). In the Jain cosmology, there are also good and evil animal spirits (*dev* and *nar*) which can be seen as remnants of ancient Hindu deities (Vishnu, Krishna, etc.). These deities are given names and are the subject of a popular cult. The same can be said of Lakshmidēv, Lakshmi's avatar, companion of Vishnu and goddess of merchants to the Hindus. Despite the dogmatic divisions, such a supernatural environment brings the worship of the Jains closer to that of the Hindus.

(21) A rough estimate of community associations in Kenya, as no census has been conducted in Tanzania and Uganda.

(22) In 1916, according to Cynthia Salvadori, 95% of the textile trade was in the hands of the Oshwals (1989: 175).

families engaged in banking activities, thereby reviving very old occupational ties. The Oshwals form a strong association (Visa Oshwal) and have numerous religious and civic structures (schools). Occupying a vast campus in the district of Parklands in Nairobi, their community centre (temple, meeting rooms, auditoriums, sports facilities, etc.) is among the most luxurious of all the Indo-Kenyan diaspora.

Also from the region of Jamnagar (Gujarat) are the Navnat Jains who belong to old families of traders who first settled in Zanzibar and then in Mombasa. Displaying a higher social status than the Oshwals, they are followers of an iconoclast religious movement (the Swetamber Stanakwasi which is different from the majority Swetamber Derawasi). Very active in philanthropic activities, the Navnats also have several homes, libraries, schools, foundations, etc.

The spiritual capital of the Jains in East Africa is Mombasa where their very famous temple is found, a replica of one of those in Dilwar in Rajasthan. Despite these differences in rank, the Jains form a rather close-knit community, notable for its religious tolerance and an exogamic openness, accepting, for example, marriages with orthodox Hindus. Within their social centres, the Jains hold frequent community meals, bringing together several hundred guests²³. From a strictly religious point of view, however, Jainism is – just as Hinduism in general – in sharp decline in the younger generations.

Two of the top business leaders in East Africa are Jains: Manu Chandaria (whose brief biography is included in another chapter of this book) and Vimal Shah, owner of Bidco Oil Refineries and first in Africa to manufacture and market food products made from palm oil²⁴.

The Sikhs, represent a religious community of a syncretic nature born in Punjab in the fifteenth century as a result of a confrontation between Hinduism and Islam²⁵. Having had to face persecution from the Mughal

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- (23) Purely vegetarian, their meals neither include tubers nor vegetables rooted in the soil (garlic, onions, etc.) for the reason that their removal, in the eyes of the faithful, might injure or to kill the microscopic animals living in their vicinity.
 - (24) Considered the second taxpayer in Kenya, Vimal Shah owns two very important edible oil refineries in Uganda (Jinja) and Tanzania (Dar es Salaam). He also owns a plantation of 60,000 hectares of palm trees in the Ugandan island of Bugala (Lake Victoria), an investment that earned him serious criticism from environmental pressure groups attached to the conservation of forest and natural resources of this region. Among other wealthy families in East Africa, we can name: Mehta (food, insurance, pharmaceuticals, electricity), Manihal Doodhia (banking), M. Shah (banking, insurance, automobile), J.H. Shah (pharmaceuticals). There are at least twenty other Jain families who have taken a leading role in the regional economy.
 - (25) Sikhs believe in one God, creator of the universe. This God is not incarnate; no representation of him can be made. The fate of every human being and the number of his

rulers, the Sikhs organized themselves in the seventeenth century into an armed brotherhood movement, the “Khalsa lions of Punjab” (*singh*), adopting an emblem with two swords, encouraging the disciples from then henceforth to give up vegetarianism. Since then, every Sikh man is in principle obliged to respect in his physical appearance and in his dressing the five precepts that have made the reputation of the community: long hair tight in a turban (*kesh*), comb (*kangha*), the fighter shorts (*kacha*), steel bracelet (*kara*) and dagger (*kirpan*). Despite these martial affirmations, the Sikhs claim to care about gender equality, with women being permitted to divorce and remarry. As little respected as it is, this declaration has long placed the Sikhs at the forefront of women’s emancipation in India.

Like most syncretic movements, Sikhism is not without contradictions arising from difficulties in combining irreconcilable cultural realities. In complete opposition to their stated willingness to ignore the castes, the Sikhs are divided into several groups, arising from the social hierarchy of the first Hindu converts. The Jats or Zamindars represent former peasant-soldiers from Punjab who were assimilated into the *kshatriya* aristocracy. The Ramgarhias (among whom there is a religious minority called Namdhari) are made up of the following people: Tarkhan (carpenters), Raj (masons), Luhar (blacksmiths), etc. Below them are the Ahluwalia (potters), the Julahaz (weavers). Coming in the last position are the descendants of the ‘untouchables’ or inferior castes of former *sudra*: sweepers, laundry workers, cobblers, peddlers, minstrels and musicians. Between these different categories, relationships are in fact – if not in principle – subject to certain restrictions: attendance of distinct temples, endogamy, etc. Furthermore, although in principle they have abandoned the observance of Hindu rituals, the Sikhs celebrate, in common with the Hindus, many Vedic calendar festivals in which the traditional gods (Vishnu, Krishna, Rama, etc.) are merely regarded as epic heroes.

After they rebelled against the British occupation, the Sikhs (especially the Zamindars) formed the backbone of the Indian Army, making up more than a third of its workforce. It is under military and police titles that the first Sikhs settled in East Africa. After the creation of *King’s Africa Rifles* (famous infantry regiment of the colonial army in Africa), many

successive rebirths before accessing *nirvana* are determined by his actions (*karma*). The way to right actions cannot be given by any ritual, any prayer, any ascetic renunciation or any intermediary (*guru*, etc.), but by divine grace (*sahj*) which is obtained through inner experience and meditation.

demobilized Sikhs chose to stay in the country. Another fraction of the Sikhs came to Kenya as railroad workers: masons, carpenters, and above all as blacksmiths and mechanics. In the continuation of these ancient crafts, the advancement of the newcomers was rapid. Today, among the Sikhs, there are many public works and building contractors, dealers in timber, furniture manufacturers, owners of garages, automobile repair workshops, petrol stations, importers of automobile spare parts, and even farmers (fractions of the Zamindars are engaged in the sugar agro-industry within the region of Kisumu). The statutory gap between the Zamindars, the Ramgarhias and other categories has not disappeared, each of these communities form their separate associations (Singh Sabha, Ramgarhia Sabha).

With almost all of them having originated from the Indo-Pakistani province of Punjab, the Sikhs of East Africa have generally maintained close links with other Punjabis in the diaspora, Hindus and Muslims²⁶. Reaching at least 30,000 people in the 1960s (including 20,000 in Kenya), the community has since dwindled and now does not exceed 15 to 20,000 people (including 8,000 in Kenya).

One of the cultural characteristics of the Sikhs, as often highlighted by observers, when compared more to the Hindus than to the Muslims from the subcontinent, is their ability to adapt to cultural contexts far from their original homeland. Sikhs, as consumers of meat – which distinguishes them from the Jains and a majority of Hindus are also consumers of alcohol, which distinguishes them from both Muslims and Hindus. However, the consumption of meat and alcohol brings the Sikhs closer to most Africans with whom their commensality does not know the difficult prejudices of other representatives of the Indian diaspora, Goan Catholics left aside. The Sikhs also have lesser reluctance regarding intermarriage, at least under the relatively common practices of cohabitation²⁷. Having, since the beginnings of colonization, spread to small urban centres in rural areas, the Sikhs reside gladly in close physical proximity to Africans, never or rarely forming micro community neighbourhoods as some Hindus, or most Jains and Ismailis do.

(26) The old Indian province of Punjab was cut in half in 1947 by the partition between India and Pakistan. The majority of the Sikhs occupying the Pakistani side then rejoined the Indian Punjab. In 1994, the Sikhs constituted 61% of the total population of the Indian state of Punjab (*Encyclopaedia of India*, XVIII, 1994: 76).

(27) See further below the chapter dedicated to family and marriages.

The Muslims

Representing a tiny portion of the 19 million of their fellow adherents²⁸ in East Africa, Muslims of Indian origin (about 62,000 people), when compared to other members in the diaspora, form a strong minority in Kenya and in Tanzania, bordering on 40% of the total number of immigrants (40,000 people in Kenya, 20,000 people in Tanzania and 3500 people in Uganda)²⁹. As is the case in the Indian subcontinent, the Indo-Muslims of the diaspora are divided into two major communities: Sunnis (between 35 and 40,000 people) and Shia (between 22 and 28,000 people). The relative importance of Shia Islam is a specific feature of the Indo-Africans. As reported earlier, this allegiance is a minority in India, and virtually absent among the Muslims of East Africa.

Independent from their own institutions, the Indo-Muslim Africans generally maintain ties with religious institutions of their host countries and in some cases, participate in these institutions, particularly in Tanzania and Kenya. In general, however, this involvement remains cautious and selective, given the political complexity that characterizes the situation of Muslims in this region of the world³⁰. Besides national organizations, the Indo-African Muslims run various philanthropic organizations in which their participation is a strong majority. This is the case in Kenya with East African Muslim Welfare Society, dominated

(28) Muslim population in the three countries: Tanzania: 10.5 million (30%), Kenya: 3.5 million (10%), Uganda: between 3 and 5 million (10 to 16% according to estimates).

(29) Data for Uganda is imprecise. See below the chapter by Laurent Nowik.

(30) Having played – and still playing – an important role in the political history of Tanzania given their demographic weight and economic importance, Muslims reside in retreat in Kenya and Uganda. In both Kenya and Tanzania, the Muslim religion is primarily tied to the existence of Arab-Swahili cultural minorities resulting from pro-slavery principalities. In Uganda, the small Muslim minority suffers from the favours it was granted at the time of the dictatorship of Idi Amin Dada, himself a Muslim. Moreover, Muslim institutions in existence since the colonial period come up against fundamentalist activist organizations in all the three East African countries. In Tanzania, the Community of Islamic Institutions unites with difficulties all Muslim organizations, among them BAKWATA (*Baraza Kuu la Waislamu wa Tanzania*), the ecumenical agency of the pilgrimage to Mecca, and also the representative the government prefers to deal with. In Kenya, the conservative Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims is opposed to various more radical organizations: National Union of Kenya Muslims, Islamic Party of Kenya and Safina Party, representing the Somali minority (itself suffering from a bad image due to the prevailing opinion). To counter the popular stigma after the fall of Idi Amin Dada, the Ugandan Muslims gathered to form the moderate Uganda Muslim Supreme Council. This organization is, however, strongly opposed by the Uganda Islamic Revolutionary Party, which is supported by Tabliq's fundamentalist activists. Concerning all these issues, see the works of Constantin (1995), Maupeu (2002), Penrad (2003) and Cussac & Gomes (2010).

by the Ismailis, or the Islamic Foundation, controlled by the Punjabi Sunnis³¹.

Descendants, almost entirely, from converted Hindu families, the Indian Muslims have preserved in their beliefs, their rituals and their social organization many traces of Hinduism. While in principle rejecting the caste system, in complete contradiction to the precepts of Islam, they recognize a statutory and socio-professional division, widely copied from the Hindu model and sometimes called the “ghost castes” system. Particularly explicit among the Sunnis, is the divide between *ashraf* (aristocrats or *onchii jat*) and *ajlaf* (commoners or *neechi jat*) which also enshrines the division of this last category in multiple *jati*, exact equivalents of their Hindu models. As for the *Arzals*, not represented in East Africa, they are still in India the true images of the “untouchables” (Mussani, Kutana, Lal Begis, Chuhra, etc.).

Originating mostly from two regions: Gujarat and Punjab, the Sunnis form rather modest groups of families, who are mainly traders and craftsmen. Except for the Koknis, they are all followers of the Hanafi ritual, which is dominant in the Indian peninsula, but ultra-minority in East Africa. In the same manner as – and even more than the Hindus – the Sunnis are divided into regional groups, partially subdivided into professional sub-groups similar, as was mentioned a little earlier, to the *jati* from which they borrow their social characteristics. Three communities are clearly the majority: the Cutchis, the Memons and the Punjabis.

Undoubtedly about 20,000 people (mostly in Mombasa, Dar es Salaam and Nairobi), the Cutchis come from the poor and sparsely populated Cutch province (or Kutch, which borders Pakistan, on the north-west of Gujarat). From a subgroup of *Sudra* Hindus converted to Islam in the sixteenth century, they have fully retained their corporate organization, as direct heirs of ancient *jati* whose names have survived (Salvadori 1989:189). About twenty of these communities are represented in East Africa (*Kumbhar*: “potters”, *Luhar*: “blacksmiths”, *Dhobi*: “laundry workers”, *Badala*: “seamen”, etc.). Keeping away from Islamist propaganda, the Cutchis nevertheless have a conservative reputation, especially when it comes to the promotion of women. Like a majority of the Sunnis, the Cutchis are highly integrated in their respective host

(31) Founded by the Aga Khan in 1937, the East African Muslim Welfare Society is an ecumenical charitable organization bringing together both Shia and Sunni members. In Tanzania, Nyerere's government disbanded it in 1968. It is still active in Kenya and Uganda.

countries. Often living together with the Swahilis – and not forming community neighbourhoods like other Indo-Africans – they practice caste endogamy, sometimes even, family endogamy, the preferred model inherited from Arab marriage (marriage of Ego to his paternal uncle's daughter). Living in large numbers in coastal towns (especially in Mombasa), the Cutchi Badalas also run modest businesses.

Descendants of the fifteenth century Lohana converts in Sindh (south-east of the present-day Pakistan), who subsequently spread to north-western India, the Memons (from Sindhi *momeen*: “faithful”) have a much higher social status than the Cutchis. They are at least 10,000 people in East Africa, divided into three regional groups, which can be barely differentiated (the Halais, the Akais and the Nasserpuria majorities). Trading in fabric (a speciality inherited from their distant Lohana influence), the Memons, who are many in Mombasa, also have representatives in Nairobi and in north-eastern Kenya (especially the Halais and the Akais). Like other Indian Muslims, they have preserved many Hindu customs, especially the exclusion of women from inheritance.

In the early twentieth century, about 15,000 Sunni Punjabi immigrated as contract workers in various fields (Salvadori 1989: 209). Like most Punjabis (Hindus included), they are indifferent to caste status, profess liberal views and lack their own organization. Most Punjabis have secured a remarkable upward mobility, especially in intellectual professions (journalists, doctors, architects, consulting engineers, and teachers). They are known in East Africa to have contributed to the construction of many mosques, particularly the Jaamia Mosque in Nairobi³². Among the Punjabis, there is a small Kashmiri group which maintains an autonomous association.

Among the other Sunni groups, there are two (the Koknis and the Balutchis) who have retained historical significance despite their small numbers. Originating from the region of Kokan (Bombay), the Koknis (or Kankonis) descend from Hindu marines converted in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (Salvadori 1989: 194). Almost all of them arrived in Zanzibar and Kenya in the late nineteenth century as independent workers (especially construction workers). Often polyglot (an ability prevalent in the Indian state of Maharashtra), the Koknis

(32) Prototype of Mughal religious art, the great mosque in Nairobi was built under the supervision of a Punjabi architect. It has many much more modest and often charming replicas in rural Kenya and Tanzania, especially in the central province of Kenya and along the Mombasa-Kampala railway line.

make modernist claims³³. Like the Punjabis, they quickly secured their social advancement (lawyers, doctors, engineers, businessmen, small manufacturers, etc.). Their adherence to the Shafite sect (dominant in East Africa) allows them to attend the same mosques as the Swahilis.

Belonging to warrior tribes, the Balutchis (Balochis) are descendants of soldiers who migrated to Gujarat: some were engaged in Zanzibar in the service of the emirates, while others came to East Africa later. Established in the coastal towns (especially in Mombasa), the Baluchis are now reduced to a few hundred people. One of their main sub-groups, the Nangaria, is among the most integrated of the Indo-Africans (Salvadori 1989: 188).

While there is, as already mentioned, virtually no Shia followers among the Kenyan Arabs and the Swahilis, the presence of Indian **Shia** in East Africa dates from a long time ago, some of them, like the Ismailis, have long exercised important brokerage and trading functions. The Shia, who enjoy a higher socio-economic presence than the Sunnis, are represented by three communities in East Africa: the Ismailis, the Bohras and the Ithnasherais.

Followers of Ishmael, the eldest son of the sixth Imam (who died in 765), the **Ismailis** are an original group within Shia Islam, now mostly concentrated in India and numbering, according to various assessments, five to twenty million people³⁴. Although they have monopolized the name of Ismailis, the Nizaris (followers of Nizar) form a fraction of it. Locally better known by the name of Khoja³⁵ or Agakhanists (disciples of the Aga Khan), to distinguish them from the Bohras, equally Ismailis but a dissident minority. The Nizari Ismailis are currently scattered in many countries (mainly in India and Pakistan, and the rest in Africa, Middle East, Central Asia, Great Britain, United States, Canada and Australia).

Coming from Syria and Persia, the Ismailis settled in north-western India in several stages, but the main conversion trends took place in the fourteenth century (Sindh, Gujarat and Maharashtra). In the same way, and even more than the Memons or some Sunni Punjabis, – and as their honorary nickname “Khoja” suggests, the Ismailis have their roots in the community of prosperous Lohana merchants and not among more modest castes, as is the case for a majority of Sunni Muslims. Very quickly, the Indian Ismailis absorbed Hindu beliefs from the

(33) They own a famous cricket club.

(34) See below the chapter by Colette Le Cour Grandmaison.

(35) From Gujarati *khwaja* meaning “lord”.

new converts. Thus, in a book dated in the fifteenth century, popular among both Hindus and Ismailis (*Das Avatar*), Ali is described as the tenth avatar of Vishnu and the Koran as the last of the Vedas. When each Imam dies, the “divine light” that entered him is transmitted to his successors. It is in this way that the current Aga Khan inherits this syncretic and miraculous identity. The Nizari syncretism was not challenged after the Aga Khan, originally established in Persia, had found refuge in India in 1840.

The Ismailis are also distinct from other Muslims in that they reject a literal (or ethnic) interpretation of the Koran due to its cultural inscription in the seventh century Bedouin society (*zahir* reading). Conversely, they advocate for an esoteric interpretation, which is essential and, indeed, cross-cultural (*batin* reading). This non-conformist and “comprehensive” attitude is sustained by a learning and initiation processes. This has led the Ismailis to neglect many of the usual precepts of Islam as derived from reading the *hadith*, *Sharia*, etc. However, the Ismailis share with other Shia a monarchical conception of the religious organization; the living Imam, light of God, plays the role of supreme and infallible guide (*hazar imam*). Called *Noorani*, “The Shining”, the Aga Khan is considered sinless. His term cannot be questioned. All property held by the community are under his exclusive control and become, therefore, his quasi-property.

As explained by Colette Le Cour Grandmaison in this book, the hierarchical and quasi-brotherhood organization particular to the Ismailis may be related to their condition of religious minority, once exposed to persecution. We also sought to understand the link between social minority and entrepreneurial vocations adopted by the disciples of the Aga Khan, a special example of “community groups”, other examples of them existing in India, especially among the Jains and the Sikhs (Weber 1996: 167-176). Their trading origins, their lack of attachment to land property, their tolerance towards lending with interest (banned by Islamic purists) have largely contributed to their rise in banking and financial activities as well as industrial companies³⁶.

The economic activity of the Ismailis cannot be separated from their corporate and religious organizations. The Khojas pay the *zakat* or legal

(36) “Islam”, said the Aga Khan in one of his many speeches to industrialists, “does not only mean faith, but work; it requires, as far as your means, creating a world in which you are drawn to practice your religion and to practice your religion, you should be able to do this: create a world in which you work” (Karim Aga Khan’s speech, quoted by Nanji 1974: 137)

alms, part of which is transferred to the Aga Khan. In accordance with the *tariqah* (*batin* reading of the *Sharia*), they also stipulate the payment of an annual tithe called *dasond*. These para-fiscal contributions feed the community budget, directly managed by the Aga Khan, and which has amassed a huge fortune, since its establishment in India more than one and a half centuries ago, making him largely independent of the deductions on the revenues of the faithful. To pay out important community grants, the Imamate government offers to the faithful dispersed throughout the world benefits of various kinds: religious, judicial, educational, social and financial.

Under the autocratic leadership of the Imam, who's furthermore very open to Western influences, the Ismailis form a kind of a de-territorialized nation. The Enlightened despot benefiting across the world from the statutory recognition reserved for heads of states, surrounded by ministers and advisers, the Aga Khan from his home in France, has authority over territorial delegates, and receives the allegiance of local councils (*jamaat*) in return.

The long history of Ismailis in East Africa generally coincides with those of the first Indo-Africans. Among the pioneers of trade along the Indian Ocean, the Nizaris, as mentioned earlier, have shared trading posts with the Arab principalities of Zanzibar, Lamu and Mombasa. They established their first community centre in Mombasa in 1888 and benefited from a special favour from the British³⁷ from the very beginning of the colonial period. Thus, they increased in numbers, reaching about 50,000 people at the end of the colonial period (20,000 in Kenya, 10,000 in Zanzibar, 12,000 in Tanganyika and at least 15,000 in Uganda), forming, with the Sikhs, the Goans and the Patels, the largest Indian immigrant communities³⁸. Despite a sharp population decline (20,000 people in the early 2000s), the disciples of the Aga Khan continue to hold leading economic positions in Kenya and Uganda. A majority shareholder in the liberal newspaper, *The Daily Nation*, the Aga Khan controls major industrial and banking institutions and part of the hotel industry in Kenya. The Ismailis are also present in various sectors:

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- (37) Among the outstanding Indian personalities in East Africa at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries was Allidina Visram, an Ismaili of humble origins, who arrived in Zanzibar at the age of 16 and was one of the first Indians to settle as a trader in German East Africa. Having opened a trading post at Fort Lugard (Kampala) in 1900, he imported, exported and founded the first Indo-Ugandan bank. His bust was erected in a square in Mombasa.
- (38) Gérard Prunier gives a figure of 14,000 Ismailis in Uganda in 1972, on the eve of the expulsion of Indians by Idi Amin Dada (Prunier 1990: 67).

higher education and research, journalism, medicine, professional services, etc.³⁹

In order to address criticisms of cosmopolitanism, the Ismaili faithful were asked from long ago to acquire the nationality of their host countries and to fulfil their civic obligations. This is also the objective of the numerous philanthropic activities of the Aga Khan: financing education campaigns, health care and medical programs, banks and architectural restoration (the Aga Khan Award for Architecture), environmental protection etc. In all the three East African countries, the Aga Khan Foundation has birthed the Aga Khan Hospitals, profitable ultra-modern health facilities which are expensive but open to all.

Having had to contend with accusations by some Muslim zealots, regarding doctrinal drift (both Hinduizing and Westernizing) and moral laxity, the Ismailis go to great lengths to show their membership to the *Umma*, the community of all Muslims. After having belatedly adopted Arabic as the liturgical language, they made its learning compulsory in their schools. In the early 1970s, teachings were given by the Aga Khan, aiming to shorten the rituals of Hindu origin while presiding at weddings and funerals. Whereas the disciples of the Aga Khan only have very few converted African faithful (between one and two thousand for the three East African countries), they founded the East African Muslim Welfare Society which works favour of non-Ismailis, as mentioned a little earlier.

Since the expulsion of Ismailis from Zanzibar in 1964, the city of Nairobi is the headquarters of the Regional Council of East Africa, controlling several institutions: the Ismailia Supreme Council, the Tariqah and Religious Education Board, the Aga Khan Foundation, etc.⁴⁰

(39) Part of the Ismaili investments actually belong to the Aga Khan himself through various agencies (Industrial Promotion Services, Tourism Promotion Services, and Industrial Promotion Buildings). But, as Colette Le Cour Grandmaison explains in this book, it is very difficult to separate what belongs directly to the Aga Khan on one hand and what belongs to the other Ismaili societies on the other hand. Among the industries or enterprises controlled by the Aga Khan or other Ismaili investors include: food industry (Premier Food, Farmer's Choice), the production and exportation of fruits and vegetables (Frigoken), tourism (Serena Hotels), electricity (Tsavo Power), stationery, packaging and printing (All Pack Industries, Printing & Packaging, Kenya Litho), chemicals (TIP Soap Industries), pharmaceuticals (Kampala Pharmaceutical Industries), textiles (Kamryn Industries), automobile (Simba Colt), plastics (Plastic and Rubber Industries), leather industry (Leather Industries of Kenya and Uganda), household electrical equipment (Reefer Industries), industrial fishing (Alpha), banking (Industrial Promotion Service), insurance (Jubilee Insurance).

(40) As Colette Le Cour Grandmaison explains in her contribution, the Ismaili "government" has five "ministerial departments" decentralized in the different parts of the world in the form of boards, themselves placed, in each regional constituency (a dozen in total) under the control of regional councils. The Aga Khan exerts his influence on regional

Second in importance among the Shia of East Africa, the Ismaili **Bohras** (less commonly called by their anthroponyms, Tayyibi Dawoodi) are descendants of a fraction of orthodox Ismailis who seceded shortly after the fall of the Fatimids in the early twelfth century. Refugees in Yemen, the Tayyibis (disciples of the Imam Al-Tayyib who mysteriously disappeared in 1132) became successful merchants, with trading posts on the west coast of India. According to the myth of origin, a group of religious Tayyibis established in Gujarat brought about conversions within the affluent circles in the region: *Vaishya*, *Kshatriya*, and even Brahmins. Separated from the Yemenis in the sixteenth century, the Tayyibis of India were soon known as the Bohras (a nickname derived from Gujarati meaning “merchant”). For their part, the Tayyibis of Yemen, greatly reduced in numbers, took the name of Sulaymani. Initially concentrated in Ahmedabad, the Indian community was persecuted by Aurengzebe, a Mughal ruler and dispersed across Gujarat, and up to Bombay (Salvadori 1989: 256).

Unlike the Nizari Ismailis, the Bohras (as indeed the Ithnasheries, who will be discussed later) do not pledge allegiance to the Imams as such, the twenty-first and last of them being Al Tayyib, who disappeared before his death according to their beliefs. Pending his “reappearance” they acknowledge as supreme leader, some kind of an interim Imam, regarded as a mere representative of the “hidden imam”. In reality – as explained a little further by Nathalie Gomes – this representative, called Dai (“missionary”), has many supernatural qualities. Deemed infallible, he has esoteric knowledge in the interpretation of the Koran. He is surrounded by several assistants (Mazoon, Mukasir, Sheikh, Mullah) who have gone through the highest levels of initiation (*ilm al-batin*).

councils (elected), appoints the leaders of regional communities (*jamaat*) and members of arbitration boards; real para-legal bodies. These bodies have competence over civil matters (particularly marital), commercial and religious. They can levy fines and order excommunications or banishments, extreme measures, which not only ostracize from the community but also certainly entail the destruction of the condemned. In all cases, the Aga Khan is the appeal body of last resort. Despite intense competition for the government posts, the Aga Khan controls the ruling class, part of which is his own creation. The leader of the Ismailis has also put in place a system of honours and titles, similar to quasi-nobility, which gives an order of precedence at official ceremonies. However, for the past thirty years or so, the Ismaili bureaucracy has become greatly professionalized, conducting recruitment through competition and calling upon graduates of major international universities to take up leadership positions. Indians in the diaspora view the Nizari organization with a mixture of hostility and envy. As will be discussed in the following pages, the other Shia communities of Indian origin have tried without full success to reproduce the model of the disciples of the Aga Khan.

Although his function is not hereditary, he appoints his successor before his death, most often from among the members of his family⁴¹.

From a doctrinal point of view, the Bohras hardly differ from the Khoja Nizaris, except for lesser infiltration of Hinduism, greater moral strictness and strong prejudices against Western influences. Just like other Ismailis, they believe, as has just been mentioned, in an esoteric interpretation of the Koran. Known only to them, this gloss must remain secret, although some is well known to the outside, such as the radical rejection of holy war. In their view, *Jihad* is an internal struggle in the conscience of every believer. The Bohra doctrine calls to mind some aspects of Calvinism, in its version of Anglo-Saxon Puritanism. From a moral point of view, the Bohras normally comply strictly with the Sharia: no alcohol, no tobacco or gambling, and prohibition of lending with interest. Men are required to wear a beard and an Islamic hat while women should cover their head with the *rida*⁴².

After the Jains and the Ismailis, the Dawoodi Bohras were the first Indians to settle in Zanzibar and Lamu in the nineteenth century⁴³. Currently, in East Africa, they represent a small fraction (15,000 people) of a community of about a million faithful still concentrated in India and Pakistan (800,000); the rest are scattered around the world (Middle East, Madagascar, United Kingdom, North America). Initially traders of all kinds, they have not accumulated as large industrial and financial fortunes as the Ismailis. Curiously, in East Africa, the Bohras became specialized in the sale of hardware, glass and sanitary equipment before engaging, more recently, in construction and property development⁴⁴.

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- (41) Designated by the respectful title of Mutlaq ("His Holiness"), the current Dai, Al-Mutlaq Syedna Muhammed Burhanuddin (52nd in the line), was born in 1915 and enthroned in 1966. Just as with the Aga Khan of the Nizaris, the faithful often seek his advice on the events of day-to-day life (choosing a spouse, undertaking an investment, etc.). The Dai made a remarkable visit to Kenya in January 2002.
 - (42) Having had the first woman Dai in their history, in the 12th century, the Bohras advocate for gender equality, a proposition which has resulted in women having a limited access to mosques. Alone of all the Indian Muslims, they practice clitoridectomy, a custom probably inherited from their religious Fatimid or Yemeni ancestors (Salvadori 1989: 265). Hotly challenged by young women of the new generation, this custom is disappearing. From their supposed Brahmin origins, the Bohras retain strong food prejudices, generally observing a vegetarian diet.
 - (43) According to Salvadori (1989: 257), there were in Lamu, in 1874, Bohra traders specialized in the exportation of the bark of mangroves to India, and in the sales of packaging for the transportation of spices in Zanzibar. See below the chapter by Nathalie Gomes.
 - (44) This approach does not seem to have been affected by the control of lending with interest. See below Nathalie Gomes' comments on this issue. The Bohras are almost never holders of food businesses and also pride themselves in not engaging in occupations formerly reserved for lower caste status: leather crafts, laundry, etc.

On a much smaller scale, the Bohra organization is similar to that of the Ismailis; the Dai appoints his representative to each elected regional council (*jamaat*). In Kenya and Tanzania, the Bohras have significant mosques, several schools, hospitals, sports clubs, women's groups, youth groups, a consumer cooperative society, etc. Like the Ismailis – and probably for the same reasons – the Bohras contribute to various charitable works (helping to build schools and mosques, support for health campaigns, etc.).

Apart from the orthodox Bohras, East Africa has got a tiny community of reformed Bohras. Created in 1910 in India, this modernistic movement (about 10,000 people in India and the diaspora) rose up against the autocratic nature of the community government. Supporters of a democratic and liberal Islam, the reformed Bohras have some similarities with the disciples of the Aga Khan; they nevertheless reject the excessive docility towards the monarchical principle. In East Africa, they are mostly represented by members of the intellectual bourgeoisie (lawyers, doctors, academics, etc.). The reformed Bohras are also known for their stance in favour of the emancipation of women. If one wishes to meet, among the members of the Indo-Muslim diaspora, educated, independent, unmarried or divorced women who are engaged in professional activities, detached from religion, engaged in political movements and associations, free to cut their hair and to dress in Western style, one must look especially among the reformed Bohras (and incidentally among the Ismailis). Despite their small numbers, the reformed Bohras have significant social and political importance in East Africa, especially in view of their active commitment to civic integration. Of all the Indo-Africans, and together with the Ismailis, they associate the most with the Europeans, a fact that has earned them the malicious and unfounded criticism of “aping” the Westerners by some Muslim radicals.

The **Ithnasheri** (literally “the followers of the twelve”) or still, the Ithnasheri Khoja, are in East Africa, the representatives of the Imami Shia or the Twelvers, which represents 90% of Shia worldwide, including 25 million in Pakistan and 10 to 15 million in India. The Imami Shia differ notably from the Ismailis for having followed the wishes of Jafar, the sixth Imam who rejected his eldest son Ishmael, and appointed his younger son Musa al Kasim to be his successor. However, the Ithnasheri of East Africa have, within the Twelvers, a specific identity. They are indeed the descendants of former Ismaili Khoja, who clashed with the Aga Khan soon after his arrival in India, and who, having been expelled

from the Aga Khan's disciples' movement in 1866, joined the mainstream Shia (Salvadori 1989: 247, 1988b Penrad: 20). Although the new converts have always displayed willingness to adhere to the strictest precepts of the Imami Shia, the circumstances of this unexpected "conversion" shows that compared to the Shia of old allegiance, they have not totally abandoned Ismaili customs – they have kept the nickname ("Khoja"), to distinguish them from the other Imamis.

Like the Ismailis, the Ithnasheris arrived in East Africa as traders, but their scattering was significant in the early years of the twentieth century (Zanzibar, Comoros, Madagascar, Reunion, Mauritius, Lamu, Mombasa, Mogadishu, Dar es Salaam, Rwanda, Burundi and Congolese Kivu). Initially specializing in the purchase and sale of agricultural products (cotton, coffee, sisal), they then diversified their activities (hardware, glass, furniture, auto parts), with some of them acquiring significant financial or industrial property. Among the East African Ithnasheris today, there is at least one major industrial family: the Meralis, well known for the diversity of their investments: tires (Firestone), telecommunications and computing (Celtel, Kenya Data Networks, East African Cables), agro-industry (tea and coffee), finance and insurance (Equatorial Bank, First Insurance Company), etc.⁴⁵ Within the three East African countries, the number of the Ithnasheris has never exceeded 15 to 20,000 people, a figure now reduced to about 12,000 (including 3,500 in Kenya)⁴⁶.

Unlike the Ismailis, the Ithnasheris have a rather slack and less hierarchical organization that adapts, however, to behavior deemed ultra-conservative: separation of sexes at the age of 9 years, compulsory wearing of the chador for girls and limited access to mosques, arranged marriages, strict endogamy, etc. Despite repeated statements of support for women's advancement and a genuine effort to educate girls, it seems the percentage of those engaged in professional life remains the lowest of all immigrant communities. From an ultra-minority group that remained in India (125,000 people in southern Gujarat and Bombay),

(45) Established in Kenya, Sameer Merali, the chairman of the group, operates in the three countries of the economic community. As was already mentioned in a previous chapter, Celtel Kenya in which Sameer Merali owns 40% of the capital is the second mobile phone operator in Kenya.

(46) In 2002, the number of Ithnasheris in the three East African countries was estimated at 16,000 by the chairman of the Nairobi Jaffery Islamic Centre (oral communication). This number, probably overvalued at the time, has since fallen sharply due to the many departures to North America. It is in Tanzania that the Ithnasheris are still numerous (8,000 to 10,000). In Uganda, however, they only have a very small number of representatives.

the East African Khoja Ithnasheri have kept few ties with their country of origin, but maintain some contacts with their fellow adherents in Iraq and Iran.

Originally from Punjab, the **Ahmadiyya** (also known as Qadiani or Mirzai) are a messianic and syncretic Muslim sect born in the nineteenth century, now dispersed throughout the world and practicing a charitable and missionary activity (about 10 million followers). Forming an activist group in East Africa (a few thousand people), the Ahmadiyya were among the few (with the Ismailis and some Hindus already mentioned) to undertake the conversion of Africans. In violation of Islamic orthodox precepts (which prohibits religious translation), they transcribed the Koran into Kiswahili and Kikuyu, but received only a small number of converts. Despite facing fairly strong opposition from other Muslims in other parts of the world (both Sunni and Shia), they are pretty well accepted in East Africa. They have several mosques and religious centres, including a large mosque in Nairobi⁴⁷.

Other religious communities

In East Africa, there are representatives of other minority Indian religious groups. The main ones are the Parsis and the Christians.

Originally from Persia (hence the name Parsi or Farsi), the **Parsis** are former Zoroastrian refugees in India from the tenth century. The Parsis believe in the existence of two antagonistic entities. The first, considered beneficial (Ahura Mazda), is celebrated by fire rituals, a cult equally widespread among the ancient Indo-Europeans. Any flame, symbol of purity, is treated with great respect, including the domestic hearth. Smoking is prohibited. Everyone constantly keeps a lit oil lamp in the home. Four fires burn within the Parsi temples evoking the division of labour into four categories: priests, warriors, craftsmen and peasants. The role of the priests is to maintain the sacred fires with sandalwood.

Settled in north-western India (Gujarat and Maharashtra) following a complex history, the Parsis turned to trade, banking, and later industry; sectors in which they now hold a dominant position in India (Tata, Bank

(47) The syncretism of the Ahmadiyya borrows from Christianity and Hinduism, accepting Krishna and Rama as prophets of Islam. Dead in Kashmir and buried in Srinagar, Jesus should, according to their beliefs, reincarnate before the end of time. The Ahmadiyya are not recognized as Muslims in many predominantly Muslim countries like Pakistan. Under pressure from Libya, their presence was banned in Uganda at the time of Idi Amin Dada. In Kenya, they are not formally represented in the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims, and therefore cannot benefit – at least in theory – from the facilities accorded by this institution to organize the pilgrimage to Mecca.

of India, etc.). Is there a relationship between the religion of the Parsis and their propensity to engage in this type of profession? This was the basis of the Weberian thesis developed some years ago by an American anthropologist (Kennedy 1962). Having been quickly westernized (the first Indian ennobled by the British was a Parsi), the Parsis – whose total number does not exceed 70,000 people (half of whom live outside the country) – have long adopted English as their domestic language and, to some extent, as their religious language (the tombstone epitaphs are written in English).

From the late nineteenth century, the Parsis migrated to areas under British influence along the Indian Ocean: Aden, Kenya, Zanzibar and South Africa. Although their number in East Africa has never exceeded 1500 people (including about 800 in Kenya), the Parsis formed a bureaucratic and intellectual elite during the colonial era: bank employees, lawyers, doctors, and architects. In Nairobi, in particular, many public buildings were, at the beginning of last century, the work of Parsi architects. Bank of India, the first bank established in Kenya, was almost exclusively run by the Parsis.

The two tiny communities in Nairobi and Mombasa (about fifty people in total) are today the remnants of this strong presence. They each have their *anjuman* (local council), their temple, their cemetery (the Parsis no longer expose their dead as before) and their local association. Regardless of its future in East Africa, the Parsi movement is however highly threatened. Despite having a progressive spirit, the Parsis are committed to the principle of endogamous intermarriage; which they see as their only way of preserving their identity. Zoroastrianism is indeed a religion of the chosen and prohibits proselytizing. As it is difficult to imagine the faithful joining from the outside through spontaneous conversion and as religious endogamy is strictly prescribed, Zoroastrianism has acquired *de facto* ethnic and hereditary character; the Parsis are all of Persian origin. For this same reason, the number of Zoroastrian followers globally has continued to decline.

Numbering between 3,000 and 4,000 people, the **Indian African Christians** (mostly Catholics) are representatives of the minority 25 million Christians living in India, mainly in the western part of the country. Leaving aside the Protestants, more recently converted by the British missionaries (mostly from the untouchables or tribal groups), this community comes from two categories of converts: the first ones dating back to the early days of Christianity and heavily influenced by the dominant Hinduism (recognition of caste, imposition of vegetarianism,

a practice of suicide of widows, etc.); the second group belonging to the second wave of conversion which took place in the sixteenth century through Portuguese occupation. Originally from Goa, the East African Indo-Christians are mostly representatives of the second group⁴⁸.

Highly appreciated by the British because of their trilingual education (Portuguese, English and Hindi) and their ability to assimilate to the European values, the Goans were in the early twentieth century the preferred recruits in the Ugandan and Kenyan civil service, even imposing a kind of monopoly at the intermediate levels of local and regional government (tax, customs, post office, etc.). Apart from the public sector, the Goans also practiced skilled professions, designed to satisfy an exclusively European clientele and rather stingy with its confidence. There were among them physicians, pharmacists, nurses or even cooks, tailors, etc.; not to mention traders in food products meant for the settlers: grocery stores, retailers of wines and spirits, bars and restaurants⁴⁹.

While Goans formed one of the largest Indian communities in East Africa in 1962 (about 15,000 people in Kenya) and provided the majority of the colonial administration's staff (about 50% in Uganda)⁵⁰, their number declined sharply after independence because of the massive recruitment of Africans to the public service. The majority of the Goans returned to India, while the younger ones tried their luck in England, the United States and Portugal.

A peculiarity of the Indo-African Christians is their uncertainty about their identity. Holders of Portuguese surnames, having long since adopted many Western customs (especially the language and clothing),

(48) More specifically, the social and regional ancestries combine to classify the Christians of India into three categories: the first, converts of the 1st and 2nd centuries (Syriac Catholics in the western sub-continent) are from the upper castes: Brahmins and Kshatriyas. The converts of the 16th century (Goa and other Portuguese colonies on the west coast) have more diverse social origins, but also have among their ancestors many representatives of the higher castes. The most recent converts (19th and 20th century) are divided between Catholics and Protestants (often Baptist), and generally belong to lower social classes or those discriminated against. Today, they (Sudra, "untouchables", tribal populations) make up more than half the Christian population. These new converts are concentrated in Tamil Nadu or the north eastern part of the subcontinent. For more on these issues, see the recent and well-documented book written by Catherine Clementin-Ojha (2008). In East Africa, there is a small minority of Indo-African Baptists (1,000 people?), some of them from the Sunni Memon group.

(49) In Uganda, Gérard Prunier notes a special fondness for such professions as tailors, watchmakers and photographers among the Goans (Prunier 1990: 70). Little is known about the financial contribution of the Goans towards the building of churches and Catholic schools in Kenya and Uganda (especially the cathedrals of Nairobi and Mombasa).

(50) Prunier (1990: 70).

they gladly show European ancestry. On the contrary, many of them still adhere to the principles of “ghost castes” and claim the heritage of high-caste Hindus⁵¹. Such is particularly the case for those practicing intellectual professions today (teachers, lawyers, doctors, architects, journalists and religious). Descending from a more modest status, and having retained the exceptional internal use of Kankani, one of the vernacular languages of Kerala- the large minority of tailors formed its own community organization: the *Santo Francisco Xavier Goan Tailors Society*. Moreover, in 1978, the wider Goan community formalised a cultural society (the *Goan Culture Society*) intended to preserve their rich Indo-Portuguese musical heritage (a kind of Fado sung in two voices in the Kankani language and accompanied by violin and tambourine)⁵².

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(51) The Goans follow an implicit hierarchy between the Lobo (priestly caste) and other castes of lower status designated by Portuguese surnames (Braganza, Da Costa, Da Souza, etc.).

(52) A very thorough description of the Goan community in Kenya is provided by Cynthia Salvadori (1989: 305-325).

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East African Indians: How Many Are They?

Laurent NOWIK

Introduction

In East Africa (Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda), the communities of Indian and Pakistani origin went through difficult times during the initial years of independence in newly established states which adopted discriminatory policies against them, and which in the case of Uganda even led to their expulsion¹. These events reversed the previous demographic dynamics characterised by uninterrupted growth. Whereas in 1969 the population of the Indian diaspora in Uganda numbered 75,000, a third of whom being Ugandan nationals², only a few hundred Indians, all of them probably Ugandan citizens, remained in the country after the events of 1972. In Kenya, the Indian population declined by about 100,000 between 1962 and 1979, therefore being roughly halved. In Tanzania, 20,000 Indians were estimated to have left Tanzania following the nationalization policy adopted by the socialist government (Prunier 1990: 239).

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- (1) The author sincerely thanks Kenya's Central Bureau of Statistics and Uganda's Bureau of Statistics for agreeing to release, for scientific purposes, information on Indian communities extracted from the last Kenyan and Ugandan censuses, when this data was in public circulation. Without the trust accorded by these two institutions, this work would not have seen the light of day. Similarly, many thanks go to Bernard Charlery who in January 2005 welcomed us to the French Institute for Research in Africa (IFRA) and whose help and support were invaluable.
 - (2) Ugandan 1969 Census.

It is known that even though the establishment of Indian settlements in East Africa started several centuries ago, massive immigration does not date back to before the arrival of the British. The fact remains that a number of people of Indian origin today have offspring born in Africa over more than five generations and no longer have links to the Indian subcontinent, though they have not undergone a complete process of acculturation into the African society.

Even though most of the Indians living in East Africa now hold the nationality of their country of residence henceforth (at least in Kenya and Tanzania) and have known no other home, their counting has always caused reticence, either over concerns of not isolating these people from other citizens or over fears of underlining their demographic importance, in view of the fact that their economic strength gives rise to disputes. In this respect, policies on demographic data collection and the dissemination of census results can be seen, in each of the three East African countries, as indicators of the differential treatment of ethnic diversity.

Concerned about national unity, Tanzania has, since its independence, stopped making any reference to the ethnic variable in censuses, whether of Africans or non-natives³. The Tanzanian government has also encouraged naturalization of Indians, who have indeed become “ordinary” citizens in public statistics because they are no longer categorized statistically. There is consequently no reason to carry demographical studies on the Indians of Tanzania any longer, except from a historical perspective. However, in socio-political reality, this does not mean that citizens of Indian origin have become citizens “like the others”, or that, within their own community, they would not be concerned about counting themselves.

Uganda, the country in which the Indian question is still the most difficult to talk about, has maintained the principle of statistical categorisation of ethnic origin, but has, since the events of 1972, desisted from releasing such information to the public. Up to 1969, publications of censuses followed the current practices in place under the British protectorate and distinguished between “African” and “non-African”. About the second group, special booklets on “non-native” citizens specified the nationality, ethnicity and geographical origin of

(3) Whereas the terms “race”, “racial group”, “tribe” and “ethnic group” were more or less synonymous during the colonial era (and until the release of the first census in independent Tanzania in 1967), governments of English-speaking countries now use the terms “tribe” or “ethnic group” to refer to “ethnic community”.

“Europeans”, “Arabs” and “Asians”. After 1969, public statistics simply distinguishing Ugandans and non-Ugandans, not mentioning any other criteria of distinction. Thus in the 1991 census – which mentioned ethnic origin in the forms distributed to the public – no information about ethnicity was published, even ignoring the existence of citizens of Indian origin as well as the percentage of Indians in the category of non-Ugandans. By doing so, Uganda came close to Tanzania’s position in terms of the release of statistics, making the decision not to distinguish citizens according to their origin in order to assuage cleavages and strengthen national unity, after several decades of bloody conflicts.

Following the 2001 census, the ethnic variable resurfaced and in 2005 the number of the nine largest “native” ethnic groups was released to the public. As for foreigners, only “Indians” were specially mentioned without, however, giving any indication of the total number of Indian or Pakistani nationals, as we will see further on.

Although it was not published, statistical data on the origin of Indian residents had been collected, as indicated above, during the two censuses of 1991 and 2001. Following our diligent requests, the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) agreed to provide the information we sought on the 1991 census. For the 2001 census, the UBOS only provided spreadsheets showing the number of residents who had indicated they were of “Asian” nationality or origin (27% of them being Ugandan-born). These spreadsheets do not provide any answer to the question of how many Ugandan citizens are of Indian origin, neither to how many people from the Indian sub-continent hold another nationality (African or British). The available information based upon the data provided to us leads to underestimations of the number of Indians living in Uganda using multiple passports. On the other hand, we will be able to present the main socio-demographic characteristics of these populations.

During various censuses conducted since the end of British colonial rule, the Kenyan government has regularly published statistics on the ethnic origin of its people, which consequently included the Indian population, as well as on citizenship. During the last census in 1999, the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) decided not to release information on ethnicity and citizenship, even though it was part of the data collected by census takers. Upon our request, the CBS agreed to release to us, for strictly scientific purposes, the set of data on Indians collected in the last two censuses (1989 and 1999). Of the three countries studied, the most precise demographic information will therefore concern Kenya.

The following three sections on each of the three countries studied follow an order chosen by the author, and are hardly interdependent. The reader who wants to learn about one country only may therefore read only the section of interest.

Indian Tanzanians

As mentioned above, since the time of independence, Tanzanian public statistics no longer numerate African ethnic groups (120 in number, according to censuses carried out in the colonial era) or citizens from other continents. The approach adopted in this section is therefore essentially historical, bearing in mind that the most detailed data date back to the period between 1931 and 1967. Indian population estimates during the German colonial period (1891–1920) are incomplete and sometimes contradictory, since the first counting carried out in 1913 cannot be considered to be a real census. From 1921, censuses commissioned by the British administration provided regular information on the population, with the exception of the interval preceding and following the Second World War (1931–1948).

The presentation will be grounded upon seven censuses:

- British censuses conducted in 1921, 1928 and 1931;
- the United Nations population report for Tanganyika (1st September 1949) written before the release of results of the 1948 census;
- the 1948 census;
- inter-censal estimates by the East African Statistical Department released in 1952;
- the 1967 census (first census carried out in the United Republic of Tanzania, when ethnic and religious identity was still being taken into account).

The Indian community in Tanganyika according to the initial enumeration exercises

Origins of immigration

Although the initial contacts between India and East Africa date back to at least two millennia (through sailors and traders), permanent Indian settlements are a more recent phenomenon. The largest settlements date back to the beginning of the 19th century in Zanzibar at the time of the Omani Arab sultanates. Coupland⁴ estimates at about one thousand

(4) Coupland (1938, 1968).

the number of Indians residing on the archipelago around 1840, while Mangat⁵ puts them at 6,000 people in 1860 (Prunier, 1990⁶: 14). These figures are questionable as well as controversial. Do they refer to Zanzibar (and to the neighbouring islands of Pemba and Mafia, also part of the archipelago), or to a larger area of East Africa that included the Kenyan coast? Another author estimates the number of Indians living in Zanzibar in 1859 to have been a mere 2,000 people⁷. All authors agree, however, that within this same region in general (from Tanga to Lamu, including Zanzibar, Pemba, Mombasa and Malindi), Indians already played an important economic role by the end of the 19th century. Few among them, nevertheless, dared to venture inland which Arab merchants almost exclusively crisscrossed at the time.

During the German occupation (*Deutsch Ost-Afrika*), most Indians remained on the coast while the Germans (aware of the gains made by their British neighbours in Kenya from the manpower they provided) urged the colonial authorities in Bombay to encourage emigration to Tanganyika. This move scored little success, according to Prunier. However, the author cites the figure of 3,000 Indian pioneers in 1900, who in some cases stayed illegally Tanganyika (Prunier 1990: 238).

Between 1900 and 1913, population growth among nationals of Indian descent was very high, reaching 9,500 in 1913 in the entire mainland Tanzania (excluding Zanzibar). This was close to double the population of non-Africans (Europeans 5,336 in the same year (United Nations 1949⁸: 140). Some of these Indians were just contractual labourers who had no definite plans of staying in Africa. The First World War then momentarily stopped the migration.

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- (5) This figure of 6,000 is high compared to 3,000 enumerated in 1900 in Tanganyika alone. See *infra*.
 - (6) Prunier (1990). See Annexe III of Prunier's publication for a historical presentation of Tanzania's Indian community.
 - (7) M.F. Lofchie (1965). See the article by Marie-Aude Fouéré in this volume.
 - (8) United Nations, Department of Social Affairs, Population Division, Trust Territories Population Report, no. 2, Population in Tanganyika, Lake Success, New York, 1 September 1949.

Image 3.1 Photograph of an Indian owned shop in Tabora during German rule



Source: <http://www.postcardman.net/141727.jpg> - *Deutsch Ost-Afrika* - Tabora - Indian shop.

After WWI

After assuming administrative control of Tanganyika in 1920 via a mandate from the League of Nations, the British encouraged new Indian immigrants to settle⁹. Out of the total population of Tanganyika estimated at 3,500,000¹⁰, Prunier puts the number of Indians living in the country at the time at about 10,000 while emphasizing the mobile nature of this population (Prunier 1990: 238). Ties developed between the Indians living in Tanganyika and those in Kenya and Uganda, since networking taking place within the Indian communities facilitated travel between the three territories.

Knowledge about the population in Tanganyika improved gradually when the British carried out the three “censuses” we mentioned in 1921, 1928 and 1931¹¹. Due to the fact that Indians were in majority

(9) It should be noted that the redrawing of borders at the initiative of the Belgian and British colonialists between Tanganyika, Rwanda and Burundi complicated statistical follow-up.

(10) Wikipedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tanzania>, 15 March 2006.

(11) The exercises “seem to have consisted in enumerating people in certain regions, complemented by assessments carried out in the other regions, in order to arrive at the total population for the entire Territory”, UN (1949: 23).

settled in urban areas – where they were neighbours with the British colonialists – and considering the role they played in the economy, they were subjected to relatively precise statistical follow-up, which was in any case easier to carry out than among the African people. In 1921, the population of Indians and Goans reached 10,209 (United Nations 1949: 140) – hardly higher than eight years earlier – but the number of Europeans had, in the interim, reduced by half due to the consequences of WWI: they were 2,447 in 1921 compared to 5,336 in 1913¹².

The 1931 census, published in 1932, indicated that 5,022,640 people were natives of Tanganyika, in addition to 8,228 Europeans and 32,398 “Asians”¹³. The census was silent about the existence of the Arab minority, though we know that the British had as a rule to numerate them. The 1949 United Nations report on the population in Tanganyika, itself marred by errors, suggested that the Arab population be included in the “Asians” group¹⁴. Carried out a year earlier, the 1948 census confirmed astatistical distinction between the two communities.

Table 3.1 Non-natives and African populations of Tanganyika (1948)

Populations	Total number in the territory	Percentage %	Part of each group (in %)
Europeans	10 648	1,4	15,2
Indians	44 248	5,9	63,1
Goans	2 006	0,3	2,9
Arabs	11 074	1,5	15,8
Others	2 184	0,3	3,1
Total Non-Africans	70 160	9,4	100
Africans	7 407 517	990,6	
Grand Total	7 477 677	1 000	

Source: Report on the population of Tanganyika, United Nations, September 1949.

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- (12) “In 1921, Germans were repatriated and none of them was allowed to come back to the Territory. European agriculture and trade had not yet shown the effects of the East African campaign, nor the depression that followed the war, UN (1949: 81).
- (13) Tanganyika Territory, 1932. Though it is not possible to access this publication in Tanzania, a copy is available at the Archives of Canada library under HA2131 A5 1931a. The British government produced similar documents, using the same methodology, for Kenya and Uganda. Various easily accessible sources via the Internet mention the 1931 census, see for example: Wikipedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tanzania>
- (14) Thus, the Indian population is estimated to be 23,422 on pages 140 and 142 of the report, but at 32,706 on page 141. In addition to the 23,422 people of Indian descent there are 1,722 Goans (UNO-UN, 1949).

From this data, the size of the Indian population can be estimated for the years 1931 and 1938. Knowing the number of the European population (especially the British) and considering the Arab population to be relatively stable (because it was not so much influenced by migratory movements), the number of Indians can be established by subtracting from a total of about 21,000 people in 1931 and 22,000 in 1938.

Table 3.2 Estimates of the population originating from the Indian sub-continent in 1931 and 1938

Populations	Years	
	1931	1938
Total Non-Africans	40 626	43 200
Europeans	8 228	9 200
Arabs	10 000	10 000
Others	1 500	1 800
=> Indian Goans	20 898	22 200

The figures on Table 2 should be taken with reservation¹⁵ since the Arab population is not known. They show nevertheless that there was probably little change in the size of the Indian population in Tanganyika between 1931 and 1938. In other words, the first wave of immigration encouraged by the British took place during the years before 1931, which are the initial years of the colony (1920-1931).

Structure of the Indian population

According to the 1931 census, the sex ratio was very unequal in favour of the male population at 159 men to 100 women. The population was generally young: people aged 45 years old and above composed 9% of the entire population while adults aged between 20 and 44 years old were 47% and those under 20 were 44% of the population. Women were a lot younger than men: 38% of men were under 20 years old compared to 56% of women in the same age bracket whose average age was not above 18 years old (25 years old was the average age for men). There was almost no stated professional activity among the women. While emphasizing relatively higher male immigration and a high number of

(15) Remember that our assumption is that Arabs had been assimilated to the “Asians” category in 1931. If the Arabs had been omitted from the 1931 statistics, then the 32,398 “Asians” were exclusively Indians and Goans, and in this case, there was a high decrease in the number of Indians between 1931 and 1938 (from 32,398 to about 21,000). Can such a decrease be credible?

single males, these figures indicate a possible higher mortality among young boys, as well as the fact that female immigrants were young, probably because many were young girls destined to get married.

Social and professional distribution

The following table, prepared using the 1931 census data, describes Indian professional distribution in Tanganyika's economy. It is evident from the table that Indians occupied an intermediate position between the Europeans and the Africans (who were not mentioned here but were at the time almost exclusively engaged in agriculture and livestock).

Table 3.3 Non-African male population between 20 and 49 years old by sectors of activity in Tanganyika – 1931 census

	Europeans		Indians + Goans		Arabs	
Agriculture and fishing	848	23%	111	1%	329	14%
Manufactures and building	341	9%	1552	17%	82	3%
Trade, finance & insurance	239	6%	3169	36%	1104	47%
Public administration and national defence	1008	27%	1365	15%	56	2%
Independent professions	558	15%	126	1%	24	1%
Office clerks	109	3%	1082	12%	154	7%
Domestic services	64	2%	445	5%	105	4%
Other sectors of activities	511	14%	1066	12%	496	21%
Total	3678	100%	8916	100%	2350	100%

Source : Report on the Non-Native, Census 1931, September 1949.

The Indians, who were a majority in business occupations like the Arabs, were also involved in industrial or administrative jobs, whereas the Arabs, less educated, were nearly excluded from these sectors. However, settled in urban areas (52% lived in Dar es Salaam, Tanga and Tabora), they almost did not engage in agriculture, neither as farmers nor as salaried employees. European farm owners in reality employed Africans to work in the fields.

Changes in Indian population between 1938 and 1948

Between 1938 and 1948, there was steady growth of the Indian population in Tanganyika, marking a break with the period of relative stagnation of the period in-between the two World Wars. Estimated at 46,254 in 1948 (including the Goans, who were 2,006), the Indian population more than doubled in a decade¹⁶. Whereas the entire population of Tanganyika in the same year was 7,477,677, the ratio of residents of Indian origin reached about 6 for every 1,000 people compared to about 4 for every 1,000 people in 1931. Indians were now 63% of the “non-African” minorities (66% inclusive of Goans), a percentage that did not exceed 50% in the 1930s. With a ratio of 122 men to 100 women in 1948, the sex ratio was more balanced than in 1931. Taking into account steady migration (of young women notably), on the one hand, and fecundity among the residents, on the other, the population structure of Indians by age remained young: 50% of the men were less than 20 years old in 1948 (38% in 1931). Whereas the male population became slightly younger (24 years old in 1948 compared to 25 in 1931), the female population became older by about two years (20 years old in 1948 compared to 18 in 1931). In contrast, between 1931 and 1948, the European population became older by an average of 7 years (28 years old in 1931 and 35 years in 1948). The under 20 years old became fewer among the Europeans (18% of the population) but remained more dominant among the Indians (50%). The age of Europeans compared to Indians reflects in its own way the dominant position held by the former over the latter.

The Indian community in Tanganyika as Trust Territory under the United Nations (1947-1961) up to the first census during post-independent Tanzania (1967)

After WWII, the management of the Tanganyika territory was handed over to the United Nations, but the British held important administrative positions as well as a leading economic role until independence (1961). After the 1964 union with the Zanzibar archipelago (geographically comprising the islands of Ugunja, Pemba and Mafia), the geopolitical entity thus became Tanzania¹⁷. During this period, and the three years

(16) There is still no distinction between Pakistanis and Indians despite the 1947 separation.

(17) Having attained independence in December 1963, Zanzibar united with independent Tanganyika in April 1964 in the follow-up of a political revolution that was hostile to the minority Omani Arabs. The new state became Tanzania, joining two names TANganyika (continental territory henceforth called “Mainland”) and ZANzibar (island territory comprising two main islands Ugunja (often confused with the entire archipelago) and Pemba, and about ten smaller islands.

that followed the creation of the new Tanzanian state, three censuses made it possible to follow the demographic progression of the Indian population: in 1952, 1957 and 1967.

Whereas the 1957 and 1967 censuses were termed as “general” (as were the 1931 and 1948 censuses), the 1952 census only concentrated on the urban centres (townships) and the some densely populated areas¹⁸. There is no mention of population that was not enumerated and the observer is not in a position to know whether the figures produced were “corrected” in order to reach an estimated figure of the total population. If this was not the case, then the Indian population may have been underestimated, even though the vast majority of this population resided in urban areas. The released figures, nevertheless, represent intermediary figures which are consistent with the earlier census (1948) and the census that followed (1957). Cf. Tables 5 and 6.

Some data on migration

In the first place information is scarce to assess the significance of the migration influx between the Indian sub-continent and Tanganyika, though it is sufficiently precise to give way to interpretations. The figure of 46,254 has been previously identified as the population of Indians and Goans enumerated in 1948 (44,248 + 2,006). The same year, 1,723 “authorized” or “legal” immigrants from the Indian sub-continent arrived at the country’s border posts, thus bringing the annual rate of immigration to the high percentage of 37%. Using the data on the influx from the three previous years (1949, 1950, 1951), we observe however that the number of Indian residents leaving the country at that time was also as high, even higher than the number of those entering the country. Table 3 thus shows a negative rate of net migration for 1949 and 1951. Several explanations have been advanced to account for this turnover. The first has already been suggested in the 1949 United Nations report: some immigrants, having planned from the onset a temporary stay in Africa, went back to India to spend their retirement there (United Nations, 1949: 88). Another explanation is that some of the Indians left Tanganyika to go to other places in East Africa (or Southern Africa), some of them “trying their luck” in several British colonies in the region.

(18) “(...) The February 1952 census focused on all non-African residents as well as Africans resident in registered urban centres and other areas with high population density”, Tanganyika Statistical Abstract, 1958.

Table 3.4 Entries and Exits in Tanganyika between 1938 and 1957

Years	ENTRIES <i>(New immigrants Indian)</i>	<i>New immigrants Indian Male</i>	<i>New immigrants Indian Female</i>	Sex ratio of entries	EXITS <i>(Returning residents)</i>
1938	1 364				
1939	1 121				
...	//				
1947	1 643				
1948	1 723				
1949	2 632				2 913
1950	2 712	1 707	1 005	170	2 316
1951	1 932	1 035	897	115	2 403
1952		1 175	956	123	
1953		1 553	1 175	132	
1954		1 333	1 213	110	
1955		1 237	1 374	90	
1956		1 044	1 179	89	
1957		908	1 045	87	

Source: East African Statistical Department (from records of Immigration and Passport office). Cf. from 1938 to 1948, Goans are included in the Indian population.

The assumption of dynamic migration that corresponded to migrants' mobility between countries can be verified by examining border police statistics, or by using the censuses which give indication of the immigrants' country of origin. In the case of former Tanganyika, the only information available is the 1951 data. That year, only 58% of the 1,932 Indians who entered the country came directly from India or Pakistan. The rest of the migrants (seven out of ten holding a British passport at the time) indeed came from other African territories: 23% had previously stayed in Kenya, 6% in Uganda and 12% came from Zanzibar, a territory which was still independent at the time (the remaining 1% coming from other places). Thus at the beginning of the 1950s, Indians significantly travelled between the three main territories of East Africa. The figures show that once the attachment to the Indian continent had

been broken, none of the East African countries was a priority option for immigration, except in a few exceptional cases¹⁹.

Secondly, as is characteristic of many migration influxes, the trend of the unequal sex ratio that was unique to the Indian immigration was unexpectedly reversed between 1950 and 1957. Whereas from 1950 to 1955, the male population remained over-represented, an inverse trend began from 1955 onwards. Such change could suggest that matrimonial strategies were deployed by some of the men who had come alone to Tanganyika and may have invited their wives or future wives to join them once they were economically stable.

The age structure of the new residents in 1957 makes this assumption probable. Besides, more women than men immigrated to Tanganyika in 1957, 482 of them aged between 15 and 29 years old while the men in the same age group were 280. The data corresponds to a sex ratio of 58 (58 men for every 100 women). As for the age group between 30 and 59 years old, the sex ratio is as high as 112.

Evolution in number and age structures

Although women who settled in Tanganyika after 1955 were more in number than men, as just seen, the entire Indian population remained dominantly male in every census. In 1952, 1957 and 1967, the sex ratio was 118, 111 and 110 respectively. In other words, the intensity of female migration was not enough to rebalance the earlier numerical advantage of the pioneer male population.

At the same time, the steady growth of the Indian population in Tanganyika between 1931 and 1948 continued – and even heightened – up to 1957 when it reached a population peak of 76,517 (Table 5). Between 1957 and 1967, the cumulative numbers from births and migration could no longer compensate for the numbers from deaths and departures. The population size therefore decreased but at a low average percentage of -0.2% per year.

(19) The high influx of Europeans (mostly British) entering and leaving Tanganyika may also be noted. However, this movement is largely a result of the limited duration of contracts of civil servants posted to the colonies.

Table 3.5 Demographic growth of the population of Indian origin in Tanganyika / Tanzania between 1931 and 1967

Years	Population of Indian origin in Tanganyika (or Mainland)	Average growth rate per year
1931	(20 898)	
1948	46 254	4,8%
1952	59 739	6,6% (*)
1957	76 536	5,1%
1967	75 015	- 0,2%

Cf. The average growth rate per year of the population of Indian origin living in Tanganyika is 4,8 % between 1931 and 1948.

(*) Seeing that the 1952 census did not cover the whole territory, it is impossible to know if the values estimated are estimated for the whole of Tanganyika or if they under-evaluate the Indian population. In that case, the average annual growth between 1948 and 1952, which is the highest during the 1931-1967 period, would even be higher (estimated at 6,6 %).

In addition, the percentage of the Indian population in Tanganyika was highest in 1957: Indians in the large sense of the word (including Pakistanis and Goans) were then 0.87% of the colony's population. This percentage fell to 0.73% ten years later. However, compared to the foreign population, and because of the high population growth among the Europeans and Arabs as indicated by the census, the percentage of Indians decreased between 1948 and 1957.

Table 3.6 Evolution of the population of Indian origin between 1931 and 1967

	1931	1938	1948	1957	1967	1967	1967
Population	Tanganyika				Tanzania	Mainland	Zanzibar
European	8 228	9 200	10 648	20 598	17 072	16 884	188
Indian	20 898	22 200	44 248	65 461			
Pakistani	NR	NR	NR	6 299	88 567	75 015	13 552
Goan	NR	NR	2 006	4 776			
Arab	10 000	10 000	11 074	19 100	86 607	29 775	56 832
Other	1 500	1 800	2 184	1 525	840	839	1
Somali	NR	NR	NR	3 114	NR	NR	NR
"Coloured"	NR	NR	NR	2 257	NR	NR	NR
Total Non-African	40 626	43 200	70 160	123 130	193 086	122 513	70 573

Population	1931	1938	1948	1957	1967	1967	1967
	Tanganyika				Tanzania	Mainland	Zanzibar
Total All Races	5 063 266	–	7 477 677	8 788 466	12 113 129	11 763 150	349 979
% of «Asians» within the total population	4,1	–	6,2	8,7	7,3	6,4	38,7
% of «Asians» within thenon-African population	51%	51%	66%	62%	46%	61%	19%

Sources: Censuses of Tanganyika and Tanzania

When Tanzania came into being in 1964, 13,552 “Asians” enumerated in Zanzibar added to the Indian population in Tanganyika (the territory that became referred to as the “Mainland” in the United Republic of Tanzania). The inclusion of the figures caused a somewhat artificial increase in the general figures. For Zanzibar as a whole without any other retrospect (although there was census in the archipelago in 1948 and 1958), it is impossible to determine whether there was also a decline in the Indian population in the Unguja and Pemba islands after 1957²⁰. What is sure is that the 1967 census data shows that the Indian presence in Zanzibar was then distinctly higher in proportion to the population than on the Mainland (about 4% instead of 0.7%, a six-fold higher). This difference can be explained by the migration to the two islands that dates back to earlier years than on the Mainland (former Zanzibari trade posts). This is what comes out of the comparison of Indian age structures in Zanzibar and on Mainland. Indeed, the ratio of people aged 60 years old and above is 4% on the mainland while it is double this percentage in Zanzibar: the population was older there because it had had the “time to age”, having arrived much earlier.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the Indians living in Tanganyika were a relatively young population, even though it no longer had the profile of a pioneer population. In 1957, the average age of the entire population was 22.2 years old, with some differences between the three communities. Indians and Pakistanis had very similar age structures: the average age was 22 years old for the Indians and 21.5 years old for the Pakistanis. As

(20) Even though, from a geographic point of view, it was part of the Zanzibar archipelago, Mafia Island was then politically linked to the mainland territory of Tanganyika and not to the political unit of Zanzibar, and therefore cannot be counted together with the rest.

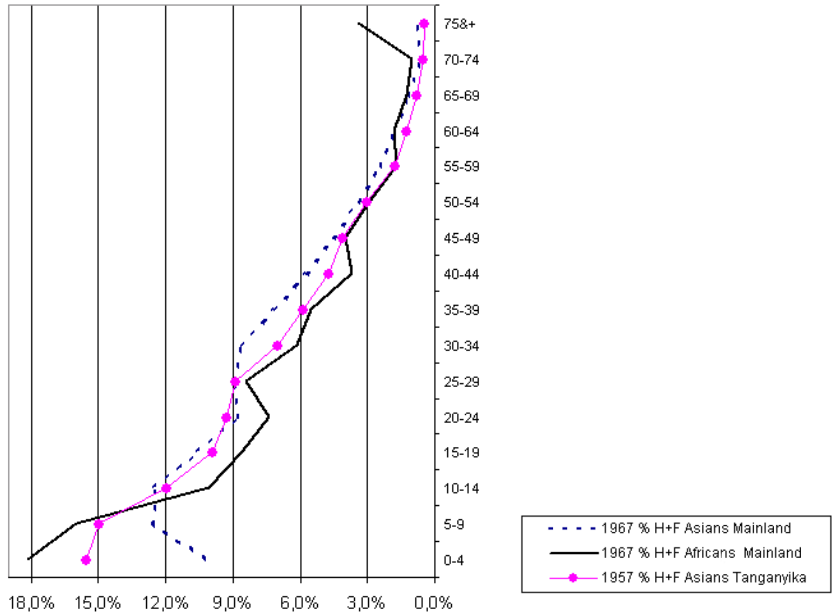
for the Goans, they were generally older owing to a lower ratio of the under 20 year-olds (average age being 24.9 years old).

In the three communities, men were older than women: +1.5 years old among the Pakistanis; +2.1 years old among the Indians. The gap was a lot more significant among the Goans: on average, men were 5.3 years older than women.

In 1957, the “Asian” age structure on the whole (Indians, Pakistanis and Goans) was hardly different from that of 1952. Even though the 1952 data is insufficient to calculate an average age, it can be observed that the ratio of the under 20 year-old youth rose to 53% for the three communities, a figure similar to the one of 1957.

The Indian age structure actually began to alter after 1957 due to the decline in the migration influx and probable change in fertility behaviour. Within a space of ten years, ageing began within the population: the “Asian” average age in Tanganyika (“Mainland”) reached 32 years old: the average age in the 1967 census was 25.4 years old on the Mainland and 26.6 years old in Zanzibar. These demographic changes are testimony of the Indian population’s uniqueness in comparison with the African native population and the long-term settlement of a higher number of immigrants.

Figure 3.1



The above diagram reveals the “pyramid” nature of the age structures in Tanganyika and Tanzania, starting with the African population in 1967. This reflects a pre-transitional demographic clustering, with the population born in Tanganyika recording high birth and mortality rates (hence the typical pyramid shape of the African populations at the time, observable even today in some countries on the continent). In 1967 (like 1957), the Indian age structure profile is different from the natives’: the ratio of the under 10 year-old youngsters is lower, while that of the 10-59 year-olds is much higher. These variations emanate from three main demographic phenomena: mortality, fertility and migration. The “migration” roots make Indians a “select” population. At any given time and in any given area, it is known that young adults are the section of the population with the highest propensity to emigrate. In 1957, for example, immigration among over 59 year-old “Asians” was low (3% of the cases). In contrast, the ages of close to half of the new immigrants (47%) were between 15 and 34 years. These numbers do not take into account the fact that a section of the young adults could have come along with their young children. In addition, mortality and fertility also distinguished “Asians” from Africans. Enjoying an intermediate status between the British and the natives, the Indians were more educated than the natives, had a higher life expectancy, and endeavoured much more to control their lineage. Between 1957 and 1967, the base of the age pyramid narrowed while the ratio of Indian adults increased. This was a sign of indisputable decline in fertility (Ref. Figure 3.1).

Religious belonging among Indian communities in Tanganyika

The 1957 census provides information on the religion of the Indian people enumerated. Most of them were Muslims (46.0%) or Hindus (44.4%) while the Sikhs came third (6.5%). Those who indicated they had come from Pakistan (having migrated before the 1947 separation) were nearly all Muslims. As for the Goans, who had been under the Portuguese cultural influence, they were almost exclusively Christian (Catholics).

Table 3.7 Distribution of immigrants of Indian origin in relation to their religion in the 1957 census²¹

Religion	Indians	Pakistanis	Goans
Christian	886	15	4 732
Hindu	29 035	3	10
Islam	30 082	6 272	9
Jain	913	0	0
Sikh	4 232	3	0
Parsee	170	0	0
Jewish	5	0	0
Other	11	0	0
Unknown	31	2	6
Total	65 365	6 295	4 757

Geographical distribution of people of Indian origin

In 1967, there were 88,567 people of Indian origin in newly created Tanzania (15% living in the archipelago of Zanzibar and 85% on the Mainland). This population mainly lived in urban areas: on the mainland, 78% of all those enumerated resided in an urban-classified area as compared to 4.3% of the African population, 25% of the Arab population and (only) 34% of the European population (there is no urban/rural distinction for Zanzibar). The Asian population's urban tropism can be explained by the specificity of the immigrants' professional occupations in sectors linked to urban activity: cottage industry and manufacture; administrative jobs, business, services... The same attraction to the cities can be observed among Indians in Kenya and Uganda.

With 36% of the Indians in the country concentrated in Dar es Salaam alone, the ratio of this population in the former capital in 1967 was equal to 11% of the total population. The different communities were, however, represented differently in the capital: one Goan out of two lived there and only one Pakistani out of four²². Due to high economic and business potential, proximity to borders and infrastructure linking them with the capital, other urban centres were also destinations of choice for the Indian communities. This was the case along the country's northern

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- (21) This table does not fully reflect the cultural and religious diversity of Indian communities. Hindus and Muslims are divided into several denominations which constitute different sub-cultures.
- (22) These are ratios calculated using the 1957 (and 1967) census data.

coast in Tanga (7,000 Indians to 1,000 Africans in the Tanga region). Near the Kenyan border and close to Nairobi, the cities of Moshi and Arusha, which were important tourist and agricultural centres (coffee), constituted meeting points for Indians from the two countries. Mwanza, situated south of Lake Victoria, received many Indian businessmen attracted by the region's wealth (cotton, coffee) and its proximity to several borders (Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi). Albeit in smaller minorities, the then rural townships of Tabora, Dodoma and Morogoro in central Tanzania, which were connected to Dar es Salaam by the railway, had Indian traders during colonial times, whether retailers or wholesalers. Though heavily dominated by Arabs (25% of the population), Indians also had a strong presence in Pemba with a ratio of up to 1.4% of the total island population (and 2% of all Indians in Tanzania).

Where is the Tanzanian Indian population today?

The counting of Indians in Tanzania thanks to public statistics stopped in 1967. Forty years later, it has consequently become impossible to measure the size of this population through national census – whether some of them had become Tanzanian citizens (“Indian Tanzanians”) or, for more recent migrants, kept their foreign nationality (Indian, Pakistani, British, Kenyan, etc.). In 2006, the diplomatic services of the Indian Embassy in Nairobi²³ estimated at about 45,000 the number of Indians living on the Tanzanian soil. This is half the figure of 1967. A large majority of them (40,000) had Tanzanian nationality, having mainly come from Gujarat and, as in the past, residing in the country's cities and urban centres (Dar es Salaam, Arusha, Dodoma, Morogoro, Zanzibar, Mwanza, Mbeya) – but to a lesser extent in Zanzibar, which many Indians, particularly Ismailis, neglected. The remaining 5,000 held Indian nationality (the other nationalities previously mentioned in 1967 are not referred to).

In order to establish the number and composition of the Indian population in Tanzania today, other forms of investigating would have to be conducted, such as deeper investigation among the representatives of religious and status communities, enumeration of pupils in schools, statistics on residence certificates). While assuming that such research methods can be conducted at the national level, it should be remembered,

(23) High Commission of India (<http://www.hcinairobi.co.ke/>). Indian diplomatic officials generally say that they cannot numerate Indians who do not hold Indian passports. Web site: <http://www.hcindiatz.org/indtanu.htm>

however, that they will never guarantee the level of accuracy that a national census can (potentially) attain.

Indian diaspora in Kenya

Indian presence in Kenya beyond the coastal region, which remained insignificant until the end of the 19th century, strengthened following the construction of the railway from Mombasa to the source of the Nile in Uganda. Contrary to the situation observed in Tanzania where public statistics authorities have for several decades stopped numerating Indians, information based on the criterion of origin is, as mentioned above, still collected in Kenya but it is no longer released. It is therefore still possible to access detailed knowledge on demographic changes, subject to permission to access all the sources²⁴.

Kenya's Indian population in retrospect²⁵

The first great wave of Indian migration to Kenya was engineered by the British at the turn of the 19th century during the construction of the Mombasa-Lake Victoria railway. However, out of the 32,000 contract workers recruited in India during this period, only 2,200 remained in the country, while about 2,500 died during construction. Considering the very low number of Indians already in the country by then – on which there is, however, no digital data – the number of Indian settlers in Kenya therefore swelled before the completion of the railway by other migratory influxes whose specific chronology and nature remain unknown.

-
- (24) In contrast, all published statistics are freely accessible. Various censuses conducted by the British before independence generally distinguished “natives” from “non-natives”, each of these two categories being subdivided statistically into “ethnic” (tribal) or national sub-categories. Not all African countries have this knowledge, as some states carried out the first census of their population only shortly after independence. As we have mentioned above, we were kindly provided upon request with the digital data on 1989 and 1999 Kenyan censuses by the Census Office Statistics of Nairobi (CBS). At the end of the chapters (Appendix 1) there is an assessment of the quality of data on the Indian population from these two most recent censuses in Kenya.
- (25) For a more complete history in French, see Prunier (1990).

Image 3.2 Photograph of the Mombasa–Lake Victoria railway under construction



Source: Museum of Nairobi, temporary exhibition on Indian heritage (January 1995) Some Indians in the middle of the photograph supervise the work of Africans.

The first British enumeration carried out in 1911 came up with a figure of 11,787 Indians in Kenya compared to 3,175 Europeans. The Indian population in Kenya doubled between 1911 and 1921 and also during the decades that followed to attain 43,623 people in 1931, 97,687 at the end of World War II (1948 census), and 176,613 in 1962, on the eve of independence. Indians, who mostly held British nationality, were then three times more numerous than Europeans.

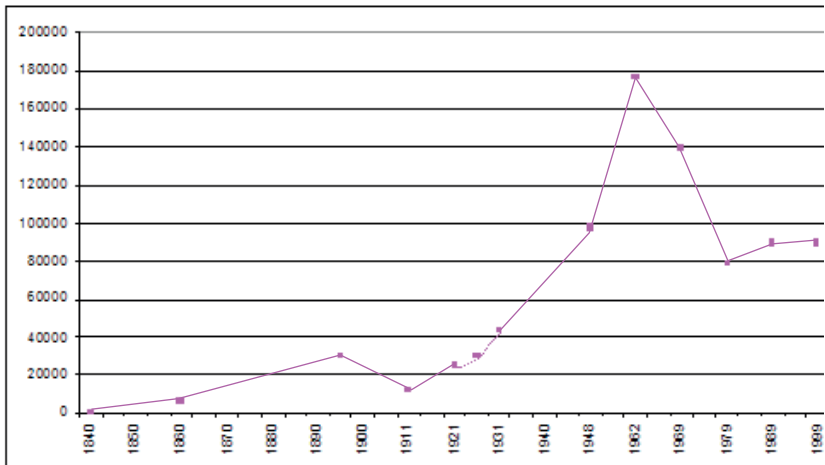
Kenya's Independence

After an African government came to power in Kenya, Indians experienced discriminatory measures aimed at limiting their business activities, and generally weakening their socio-economic influence (such as the Trade Licensing Act). At the end of 1967, many people began to migrate from the country (mainly to Great Britain) as a premonition of the events that occurred five years later in Uganda following the expulsions and systematic expropriation. In the 1969 census, the Indian population in Kenya had decreased by 37,500 people. The exodus continued during the following years, with thousands of people leaving their adopted homeland without plans of coming back. The number of

Indian settlers was halved within fifteen years, attaining a total 78,600 individuals only in 1979.

However, under Daniel arap Moi’s presidency, the Indians who had remained in Kenya found themselves in a more satisfactory social and economic standing and a reverse migration trend began, either due to the return of former settlers or fresh arrivals in the country. Spread throughout in multiple areas of activity, Indian investment played an important role in modernizing the country. Even though time was ripe for renewed demographic growth of Indian communities, it remained very moderate. Thus the population of Indian settlers in Kenya attained 89,000 in 1999, a figure just above the number recorded thirty-seven years earlier in 1962.

Figure 3.2 Evolution of the Indian population or the population of Indian origin living in Kenya (1840–1999)



Sources: CBS, Kenyan population census

During the entire 20th century, population growth among the Indians followed by a decline after November 1967 changed their place in the national population or in comparison to the two other important non-African communities in Kenya: Europeans and Arabs. There is substantial data attesting such changes seeing that the British, as previously mentioned, always conducted census of the so-called “non-native” populations of Kenya separately (“Non-Native Population of Kenya Colony and Protectorate”). The separate count rule continued after independence, with the new census authorities calling it the “non-African” population category.

From 1911, Indian population (together with Goans, who were considered separate from Indians until the 1949 census) was the highest of the three “non-African” groups, accounting for 50%. This proportion attained 2/3 of non-Africans between 1948 and 1969, in spite of the wave of Indian departures following independence, but was compensated by departures of European settlers as well as Arabs, who were also affected by discriminatory provisions of the Trade Licensing Act²⁶. During the entire 20th century, the Indian population remained two to three times higher than the Europeans.

Being the first minority group of the country, Indians were and are still noticeable in the population because they mainly live in urban areas and are concentrated in certain districts. However, during the 20th century and despite the growth in their numbers until 1967, their demographic weight in Kenya was eroded due to high growth rate of the African population. There were 20 Indians for every 1,000 Kenyan inhabitants in 1962, less than 13 in 1969 and only 3 in 1999 (and this ratio is still decreasing today).

Table 3.8 Evolution of the three main non-African populations living in Kenya between 1911 and 1989

Years	1911	1921	1926	1931	1948	1962	1969	1979	1989
Indians (and Goans)	11787	25253	29324	43623	97687	176613	139037	78600	89185
Europeans	3175	9651	12526	16812	29660	55759	40593	39901	34560
Arabs	9100	10102	10557	12166	24174	34048	27886	39146	41595

Sources: The East African Statistical Department until 1948 then the Statistics Division.

As for regional distribution, the two largest Kenyan cities, Nairobi and Mombasa, were home to the majority of the country’s Indians in 1948 (about 70%). Whereas during the entire first half of the 20th century, the number of Indians in Mombasa was close to the number in Nairobi, there was a significant decline in their numbers in Mombasa in the second half of the century, with close to half of the Indians residing in the capital compared to only a quarter in Mombasa. These ratios were still evident at the very end of the century (1999), as will be observed in the following section.

(26) Restricting the issuance of the lion’s share of business licences to Kenyan citizens.

Contemporary Indian population in Kenya

In view of the above retrospect, we can now zoom in on the characteristics of the “Indian” population currently living in Kenya (2008), using data of the 1999 census in comparison with those of 1989 (the next Kenyan census is planned for 2009 and detailed data collected will not be available before 2011²⁷).

The 1999 census made it possible to account for close to 90,000 Indians living in the country (Ref. Annex 1). This figure included both holders of Kenyan citizenship, holders of foreign passports (Indian, Pakistani, United Kingdom, etc.), and people classified “other Asians” of unspecified citizenship, but probably originating from former Indian possessions of the British Empire (Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, etc.). These statistics obviously cannot be taken as reflecting any exhaustive enumeration. Even without necessarily questioning the quality of data collection in Kenya, the capacity to gather information on all individuals is hindered by objective conditions defining the specific situation which affect some of them (geographical isolation, illiteracy, etc.). In addition, as in every country of the world, people who want to conceal their presence and who believe they can be identified through a census try not to answer such questions. This is the case of those who fear sanctions of any nature from the regulatory authorities (such as people concerned with escaping the tax regime or previous fiscal fraud, contravention of labour laws, illegal entry into the country, overstaying the authorized visa period, etc.).

Even though, for the above-mentioned reasons, it is highly plausible that part of the population in Kenya was not enumerated (which particularly comprises immigrants who just recently entered the country), it remains difficult to assess its scope. It should be noted, however, that according to the 1999 census, the number of enumerated “Asians” who were not Kenyan residents one year earlier (1998) was as high as 7,036, close to 8% of the total population. This mobility, which can be attributed to external factors, is therefore relatively high. Moreover, it accounts for 60% of the Indian residential mobility between 1998 and 1999²⁸.

As high as these figures may be, it appears nevertheless unlikely that the number of unaccounted “Indians” in Kenya is higher than 10% of

(27) It has not been possible to update this article by taking into consideration the last census.

(28) The remaining 40% are “Asians” who had moved from one district to another within Kenya.

the community's total population²⁹. The conclusion of the latest census is that the entire Indian population in 1999 did not exceed 100,000³⁰, a figure that, it should not be forgotten, should be compared to the highest figure attained thirty-seven years earlier in 1962 (about 200,000 people taking into consideration an equivalent percentage of unaccounted for individuals). Even though this figure appears definitely lower than some authors' estimates³¹, the fact remains that "Asians" are still today the largest non-African minority in the country, with about half of this population being Kenyan nationals³².

Three quarters of Indians still concentrated in Nairobi and Mombasa in 1999

The 89,310 "Asians" enumerated in 1999 in Kenya are very unevenly distributed all over the country. Just as it has always been in Kenya, and everywhere in East Africa, this population essentially lives in urban areas (94.9% urban areas; 1.3% non-urban areas), with the percentage of those resident in rural areas hardly above 3.9%. Half of the population (50.5% or 45,088) are concentrated in the Nairobi area alone while a quarter (26.8% or 23,894) live in Mombasa. The remaining quarter is spread in 67 other districts around the country. Apart from Nairobi and Mombasa, four districts have between 1,000 and 3,340 Indian residents: Kisumu, Nakuru, Uasin Gishu (Eldoret) and Thika, while in 35 districts (one out of two) resident members of the "Indian" community are less than 100 people (26 out of 50). It is worth noting, however, that out of the 2,432 locations in Kenya, 1,084 of them – close to half – host members of the Indian diaspora (see maps in Annex 3)³³. Even though the Indian population is highly concentrated in some parts of the country and despite being small in absolute numbers, few Africans are completely unaware of their presence.

(29) A figure between 3 and 8% seems more realistic.

(30) Supposing, in a totally arbitrary manner, that one entry out of four is illegal, leading within five years to either to status regularization or to relocation in another country, there would be less than 10,000 Indians currently illegally resident in Kenya.

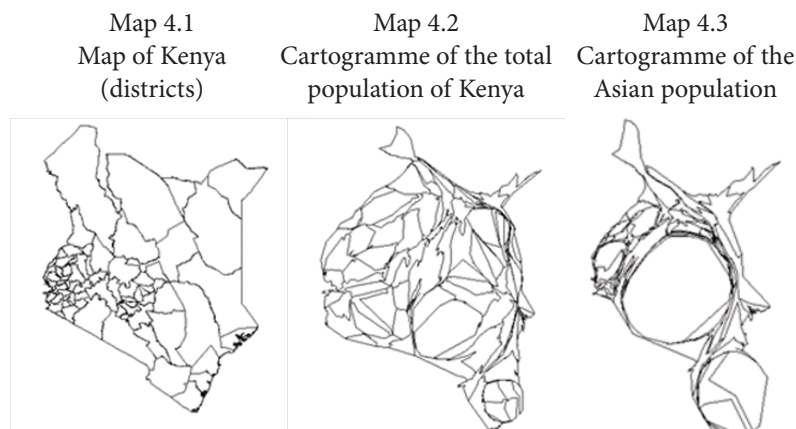
(31) Particularly Michel Adam, who advances a figure of 120,000 for the year 2002 based on approximate enumerations with the help of local authorities (Adam 2006: 302).

(32) In its publication *Population and Housing Census, Analytical Report on population Dynamics*, vol. III, 2001, p. 48, the Central Bureau of Statistics estimates the number of "Asian" immigrants without Kenyan nationality (foreigners) living in Kenya in 1999 at about 82,000. This figure contradicts data from the same institution in Table 3.26 of Annex 1.

(33) Locations in Kenya are administrative units that are equivalent to the French "*communes*". Nairobi is an exception as each location is a "residential estate".

The maps below summarize graphically show the concentration of Indians in some districts, especially the specificity of their distribution throughout the country vis-à-vis the distribution of the entire Kenyan population.

Image 3.3 Maps of Kenyan districts, total population and Asian population per district



Source: UBOS – Kenyan 1999 Census

Cartogrammes were made with the help of Dominique Andrieu (Tours, France)

Map 4.1 shows the administrative outline of Kenyan districts. The unequal surface areas covered by the districts, particularly the very smaller ones in the west (around Lake Victoria), and the larger districts in the north, towards Sudan and Ethiopia, is immediately noticeable. Generally, this spatial inequality is inversely proportional to population density: a district with high density cannot be administered properly if its area is small. In addition, there is less interest in producing chromatic maps based on the administrative borders, because the eye tends to be less attracted to least populated areas. The cartogram technique which artificially distorts the contours and the surfaces of the districts (maps 4.2 and 4.3) makes it possible to go round this difficulty and to better identify the districts with higher populations. Thus, the 4.2 view shows what the map of Kenya would be if the areas of the districts were proportional to their population size. The “small” districts (geographically significant) in western Kenya are therefore very easy to find, just like the capital, Nairobi, which was nearly invisible on the first map.

On the same note, the third view (“Indian” population cartogram) indicates the very unique nature of this community vis-à-vis the entire

Kenyan population. The two centres, Nairobi and Mombasa, appear to be ultra-dominant as other districts fade out. Only Kisumu and Eldoret, to the west, provide noticeable secondary centres. This diagram confirms the very urban nature of the “Indian” population distribution.

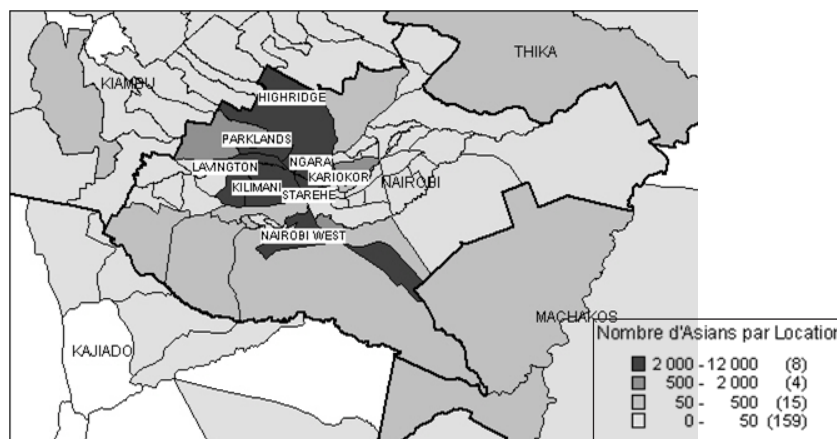
In the 1999 census, even in the districts that have the highest number of “Indians”, the relative weight of this community is light. In 64 out of the 67 districts, they account for less than 0.5% of the total population. Though fewer Indians live in Mombasa than in Nairobi, the community’s relative weight is heavier in the coastal city, accounting for 3.6% (1 in every 28 residents). In the Nairobi areas, the percentage “Indians” is hardly above 2% of the total population (2.1% or 1 out of every 48 residents).

Inequality in the Indian population distribution between districts is accentuated by inequality in distribution within the districts. In Nairobi, the divisions (sub-units of districts) in which the largest number of Indians are concentrated: Westlands (50.2% of all “Asians”), Central Nairobi (28.6%) and Kibera (13.5%)³⁴. In Mombasa, “Indian” communities are concentrated in the central part of the city (84.4% in the “Island” division); Kisauni district comes a distant second with 13.2% of Indians.

This type of geographical distribution shows that the people concerned opt to settle in communities in relation to their economic activities or their social status. Bernard Calas argues that these spatial settlements make up “racial and social” territories insofar as Nairobi is a “socially compartmentalized” city (Calas 1998: 31, 47). Some authors also emphasized the low level of social relations between “Indian” communities and the African population, a situation that does not encourage social and ethnic cohabitation in the residential estates. In Nairobi, as everywhere in the world, the average price of real estate property within the locations and divisions is also likely to give the researcher a clear idea of the social roots of its residents.

(34) This actually refers to Nairobi West estate, which is part of Kibera Division. For Nairobi residents, Kibera particularly refers to the sprawling slum situated north of the division with the same name.

Image 3.4 Map of Nairobi district – Indian Population by « *location* » (1999)



Source: CBS - Kenya 1999 Census

The map shows Nairobi District (surrounded by Kiambu District to the west, Thika to the north-east, Kajiado to the south and Machakos to the east) and the various locations that are part of it. The pattern underlines Indian presence in every location and outlines eight in which more than 2,000 Indians were enumerated in 1999. By descending order, they are Highridge, Ngara, Nairobi West, Parklands, Kariokor, Kilimani, Lavington and Starehe. These eight locations are home to 89% of the Indian population or of Indian origin resident in Nairobi area.

Table 3.9 « Locations » of Nairobi district having more than 2000 Asian inhabitants – Socio-economic indicators.

Division	Location	Asian Inhabitants	Sex ratio	Relations Indo-Kenyans/Indians	Educated at the university	Employed/working	Retired	Jobseeker	Born in India (or in Sudan)	Born in Nairobi district
Central	Starehe	3060	122	11%	4%	28%	1%	10%	51%	27%
Central	Kariakor	3603	102	153%	4%	22%	2%	15%	11%	48%
Central	Ngara	6612	115	63%	14%	28%	2%	10%	47%	37%
Westlands	Parklands	3703	106	106%	25%	22%	4%	7%	21%	52%
Westlands	Highridge	11908	109	178%	21%	24%	4%	8%	33%	45%
Westlands	Kilimani	3216	106	57%	35%	31%	3%	6%	36%	36%
Westlands	Lavington	3011	109	102%	34%	29%	3%	6%	30%	46%
Kibera	Nairobi West	5330	110	87%	17%	27%	3%	9%	28%	42%
Nairobi District		47500	111	97%	19%	25%	3%	9%	31%	41%

Source: CBS - Kenya 1999 Census

Some socio-economic indicators make it possible to distinguish the “locations”.

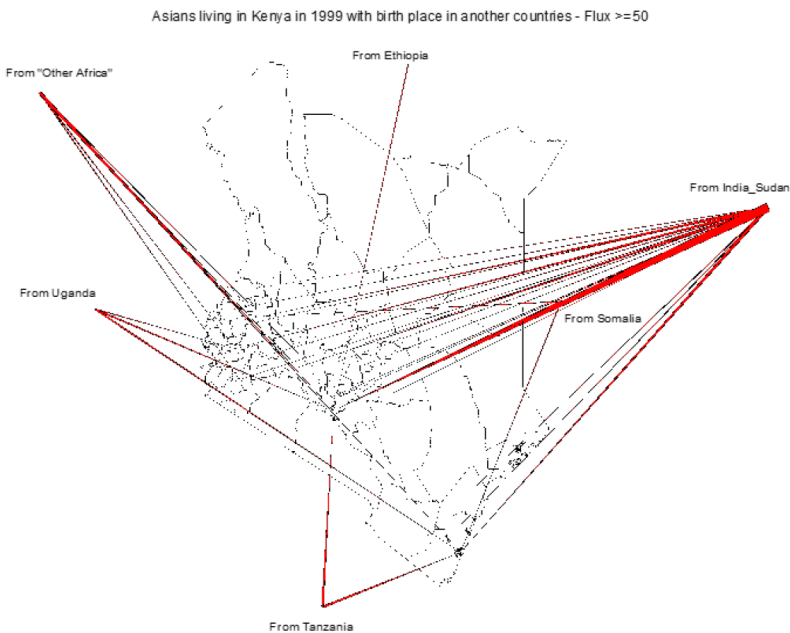
- In Kibera Division, the profile of residents in Nairobi West location is close to that of Indian residents in the entire Nairobi District.
- In the four locations of Westlands in which the largest part of the “Indian” population is concentrated, the sex ratio is more or less balanced and a big fraction of the residents belongs to higher social categories. The ratio of those who went to university is distinctly higher than elsewhere, particularly (minority population) in Kilimani and Lavington locations, which were residential areas for most Europeans. Among the eight locations in Table 9, the ratio of held assets is highest and the number of jobseekers is the least in Kilimani and Lavington. For their part, Highridge residents, who constitute half of all “Indian” residents in Westlands Division, seem be settled there for a long time because most of them declare they are Indian Kenyans; close to half of them were born in the district and retired people are more numerous than elsewhere.
- The Downtown (Central) Division hosts Indians belonging to lower social categories. A comparison of the three residential areas reveals other common points with residents of Starehe and Ngara areas, which have a high proportion of recent immigrants (highly unbalanced sex ratio, high percentage of people born in India). Kariokor residents, with an equivalent social status (even much lower than that of Ngara residents seeing the low percentage of those who have gone to university), have different characteristics. Settled for a long time in Kenya (a sex ratio of nearly 100), Kariokor residents are mostly Indian Kenyans (with the lowest proportion of people born in India). Economically, they appear more vulnerable, with less held assets and a high percentage of jobless people.

Places of birth of Indians living in Kenya

Two thirds of people of Indian descent enumerated in 1999 were born in Kenya (there is caution with regard to the number of those born on the African continent). It can be assumed that having kept major cultural traits of their ancestral land, they changed some of its aspects due to the spatial distance and initial socialization that did not take place neither in India nor in Pakistan. Despite the small size of their community – compared to the African population – these people are now part of the East African human reality.

Curiously, the percentage of “Indians” born in Kenya may have nevertheless decreased between 1989 and 1999 from 75% to 66% of the total “Indian” population, whilst the total figures between the two censuses seem to have been somehow stable. Even though this data can be interpreted as a sign of increasing mobility within the diaspora, it should not be ruled out that it could have been released as a result of typing errors, as several errors identified in the 1999 census may lead to suspect (see Annex 1: confusion between Sudan and India and lack of data on natives of non-African countries in 1999).

Figure 3.3 Birth place of people of Indian origin living in Kenya in 1999



Indian populations in urban centres

Although concentrated in some urban centres, “Indian” populations in major Kenyan cities do not show the same characteristics, which are related to the history of Indian migration in East Africa and with the stated centrality of the capital. The “Indian” population in the coastal city of Mombasa is the most unique, with 71% of people of Indian descent in 1999 declaring they were Kenyan-Asians. In Nairobi, this percentage did not exceed 44% while in Kisumu, a city on the shores of Lake Victoria,

the percentage was only 33%³⁵. Conversely, the percentage of people who said they were “Indian” in Mombasa (22%) is half of those who said the same in Nairobi (46%) and nearly a third of those in Eldoret (56%) and Kisumu (59%).

These differences cannot be understood without reference to the initial years of the diaspora. The coastal region of Mombasa (including the former trade posts of Malindi and Lamu) was the first to receive immigrants. There is little surprise therefore that the area has the lowest percentage of “pioneer immigrants”. Moreover, Mombasa is no longer the “gateway” to the country since most of the travelling is by air. Access to the country is now through Nairobi, which plays the role of “turntable” for the migratory routes. It is after a rather long stay in the capital that the new newcomers make the eventual decision to plunge into further migration towards smaller towns, such as Kisumu, Nakuru or Eldoret.

Table 3.10 Birth place of *Asians* Living in Nairobi, Mombasa, Eldoret, Kisumu and Nakuru.

Birth place	City/town of residence				
	Nairobi	Mombasa	Eldoret	Kisumu	Nakuru
Uganda	1,0%	2,8%	1,5%	1,6%	0,7%
Tanzania	2,0%	2,8%	0,9%	1,5%	1,5%
Ethiopia	0,2%	0,0%	0,1%	0,3%	0,0%
Somalia	1,1%	1,2%	3,4%	0,8%	0,5%
India (+ Sudan ?)	31,8%	10,8%	44,7%	31,9%	37,5%
Nairobi	43,0%	3,8%	6,5%	5,3%	8,6%
Mombasa	7,1%	71,7%	4,9%	5,2%	8,0%
Eldoret	0,2%	0,1%	25,6%	0,3%	1,7%
Kisumu	1,2%	0,6%	1,9%	40,0%	1,8%
Nakuru	0,6%	0,2%	0,9%	0,8%	28,9%
Other cities	11,7%	5,8%	9,6%	12,5%	10,7%
Other African cities	4,8%	1,7%	1,4%	1,9%	4,6%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

(35) Remember that we identified the Indian population living in Kenya using the P13-Tribe census variable. Four modes of this “tribe” variable are used to define the population: “Kenyan-Asians”, “Indians”, “Pakistanis” and “Other Asians”. The first two modes account for 90% of the individuals (Ref. Annex 1 data). We assume that there is a bias in saying that one is “Kenyan-Asian” or “Indian”: 13% of “Kenyan-Asians” are born in India compared to 40% of “Indians”.

Birth place	City/town of residence				
	Nairobi	Mombasa	Eldoret	Kisumu	Nakuru
<i>Total in absolute numbers</i>	45088	23894	2230	3340	2568

Source : CBS - Kenya 1999 Census

By matching places of birth with places of residence in 1999, one can assume the degree of autochthony of individuals. Close to three out of four Indians living in Mombasa are born in the city, whereas this proportion falls to less than one out of two in Nairobi and less than one out of three in Nakuru and Eldoret.

In Mombasa, Indians born in India are also significantly less numerous in proportion (10.8%). They are three times more in Nairobi and four times more in Eldoret. Among the five large urban centres that have a high concentration of members of the Indian diaspora, Eldoret appears to have received the most recent immigrants.

Socio-demographic characteristics of Indian population are distinct from African population

Fertility rates

According to the 1999 census, Indian women and girls of twelve years old and above said they had given birth to 0.81 boys and 0.77 girls (a “consistent” masculinity ratio of 1.05). These figures, which cannot constitute reliable birth rate, and less fertility indicators, nevertheless demonstrate a lower birth rate compared to the general level of fertility in Kenya. In 1999, our estimated gross birth rate was less than 14‰ for “Indians”, and around 38‰ for Kenya. Even though fertility tended to decrease in the country, it stabilized around the same time at around 5 children per woman³⁶. Fertility among women from the Indian sub-continent was therefore lower than those of Kenyan women (on the whole); it also proves to be lower than the rate observed in their ancestral land (in 1999, India had a cyclical fertility indicator equal to 3.4 children per woman, while Pakistan had 5.6).

(36) Source: INED (1999). It should be noted that in the “Demographic and Health Survey”, the cyclical fertility indicator was estimated at 4.7 children for every woman in Kenya in 1998 (3.1 in the urban centres and 5.2 in rural areas). This figure was cited by INED in its publication mentioned above. However, the census results point to a slight underestimation of “momentary fertility” compared to the 1998 survey on population and health. See KENYA 1999, *Population and Housing Census, Analytical Report on Population Dynamics* – vol. III, pp. 13-21.

Household Structures

The Indian diaspora had 21,432 households in 1999, 87% of them of male heads³⁷. By dividing the number of enumerated individuals within the same category (“Asians”) by the number of households, it is possible to deduce the average size of households, which stabilized at 4.2 people in 1999. Compared to African populations, “nuclear” type households are more widespread. However, such households are far from being exclusive since close to a quarter of enumerated people within the Indian community (24.1%) live in households without being neither family head nor household wife or children. They can be relatives, brothers and sisters of the head of the household or his wife, cousins, (...) or of non-family “acquaintances”.

Table 3.11 Relationship with the referent person (household head) according to gender

Family position	Male	Female	Total	Male %	Female %
Head	18597	2835	21432	87%	13%
Spouse	505	14500	15005	3%	97%
Son	17205	0	17205	100%	0%
Daughter	0	14136	14136	0%	100%
Brother/Sister	1640	1181	2821	58%	42%
Father/Mother	512	1284	1796	29%	71%
Other Relative	6313	7781	14094	45%	55%
Non-Relative	1740	1079	2819	62%	38%
Unknown			2	0%	100%
TOTAL	46512	42798	89310	52%	48%

Source : CBS – Kenya 1999 Census

Remarkable age structure

Owing to the history of migration and a relatively low fertility, the age structure of the Indian population or the population of Indian origin is quite different from that of the Kenyan population. As shown in the diagrams below, the age structure of the Indian diaspora resembles that of a Western country with a base percentage smaller than the median percentage.

(37) “Heads” meaning “heads of family”.

Figure 3.4 Age structure of the population of Indian origin in Kenya in 1999

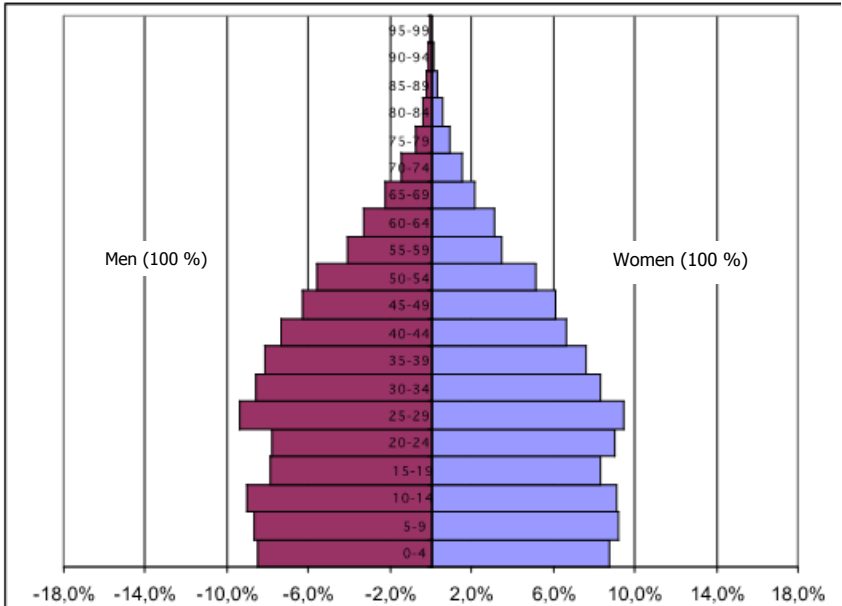
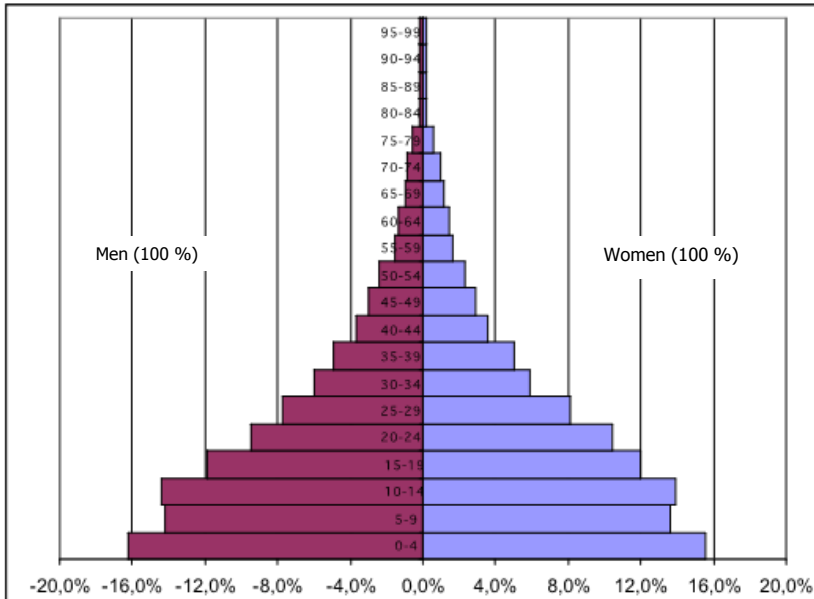


Figure 3.5 Age pyramid of the Kenyan population in 1999



In the Indian population or the population of Indian origin, those less than 25 years old are slightly more numerous than those aged between 25 and 60 years old, a trait that does not only result from the decrease in fertility but also from demographic peculiarities in the immigrant population. Current migratory influxes, which are even less important than in the past, add to the adult age pyramid (young adults more often than not). Beyond 55 years old, there is a rapid decrease in figures because of higher mortality among the elderly (higher here than in Western countries), and also because immigrants are rarely elderly people. Contrary to this distribution, the age structure of the Kenyan population (including “Indians”) is a “developing country” type age structure, which has a much larger base (high birth rate) and a rapidly narrowing pyramid towards the summit (high mortality): those less than 25 years old are two thirds (66%) of the total population.

Level of education is much higher among “Asians” than in the Kenyan population

Education is another major difference between the Indian population or population of Indian origin and the entire Kenyan population. The first comparison, between “Asians” and “Kenyans” in general (including “Asians”), brings out a sharp contrast between the two categories. Only 6.2% of “Indians” have never been to school compared to 18.2% of Kenyans; 15.3% of “Indians” have gone to university compared to 0.8% of the country’s entire population³⁸. However, the sociological relevance of such a comparison is limited because of the disparity in access to school in rural areas (where 70% of Kenyans live) and urban areas (where 95% “Indians” live). In this respect, comparison between the schooling rate among Indians and the schooling rate among Kenyans resident in urban areas shows – as we will see a little further ahead – results with less contrast (this would be more so the case if the comparison involved urban African families at the same social level).

As shown in the tables below, the schooling rate among “Indian” children compared to Kenyan children is higher from primary school and the gap is especially wide between 15 and 24 years old. For the ages that correspond to university education, about two times more “Indian” boys receive education within the reference urban population (2.5 times for girls). There are differences in schooling between boys and girls

(38) For the rates in Kenya, we calculate the figures using data from: KENYA 1999, *Population and Housing Census, Socio-economic profile of the population* – vol. II, Tables 1 and 2 on education.

within the “Indian” population (to the detriment of girls), but they are less significant than within the Kenyan population, including all ethnic groups. In the category of people who have never been to school, the percentage of “Indians” is still the lowest, for men and women alike³⁹.

Table 3.12a Proportion of the Indian population in Kenya according to education status in 1999

	Going to school			Left school			Never been to school		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
6-9 years old	88,2%	88,2%	88,2%	8,0%	8,3%	8,2%	3,7%	3,5%	3,6%
10-14	90,6%	90,0%	90,3%	7,2%	7,6%	7,4%	2,2%	2,3%	2,3%
15-19	68,0%	62,4%	65,2%	29,5%	34,1%	31,8%	2,6%	3,5%	3,0%
20-24	17,9%	15,6%	16,7%	79,9%	80,6%	80,3%	2,2%	3,8%	3,0%
25-29	2,9%	2,9%	2,9%	94,8%	92,2%	93,5%	2,3%	4,9%	3,6%
30 +	1,5%	1,5%	1,5%	93,1%	83,0%	88,4%	5,3%	15,4%	10,0%

Table 3.12b Proportion of the urban Kenyan population according to education status in 1999

	Going to school			Left school			Never been to school		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
6-9 yr old	82,6%	82,0%	82,3%	3,3%	3,7%	3,5%	8,5%	9,0%	8,7%
10-14	86,6%	80,3%	83,2%	6,5%	10,5%	8,6%	4,7%	7,3%	6,1%
15-19	49,6%	37,2%	42,7%	43,9%	54,6%	49,8%	4,7%	6,7%	5,8%
20-24	8,6%	6,3%	7,4%	86,7%	87,4%	87,0%	3,3%	4,9%	4,1%
25-29	2,6%	2,2%	2,4%	93,0%	90,5%	91,9%	3,0%	6,1%	4,5%
30 +	1,4%	1,4%	1,4%	88,7%	74,7%	83,0%	8,5%	22,4%	14,1%

Source : CBS - Kenya 1999 Census

People of Indian origin have higher schooling rates or have gone to school more than Kenyans residing in urban centres. Consequently, their literacy levels are also on the average higher than in the reference

(39) It is worth noting with some surprise that, among the Asians, more boys and girls between 6 to 9 years old (and 10-14 year-old boys) have left school than Kenyan children, but it is in the Kenyan population that the highest number of 6-9 year-old children have never been to school.

population. Even in Nairobi, the capital city and city of most universities, the residents' (as well as "Indians") literacy levels are lower than that of the entire "Indian" population. Among residents who have completed their initial training, 4% have attained university level (completed undergraduate and above) while 2.3% have attained secondary education at high school level (Forms 5-6). These percentages are 13.2% and 5.4% respectively within the Indian people or people of Indian origin.

What are the latest changes in the Indian population in Kenya?

According to the digital files we accessed from the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) – whose quality is appreciated in Annex 1 – the Indian population increased slightly between 1989 and 1999 (an estimated 86,205 individuals in 1989 and 89,310 in 1999, representing a growth of 3.6% in 10 years). However, official publications from the 1989 census results are not entirely consistent with these files, since the literature shows a figure of 89,185 people of Indian origin. If the latter figure were to be retained, we would speak of virtually stable figures instead of moderate growth during the inter-census period. The issue of total figure therefore remains debatable, but the gaps between the sources are relatively narrow. Moreover, whatever statistics are retained, using the files of the last two censuses enables us to give an insight of the dynamic aspects of recent demographic changes in the Indian populations in Kenya.

Positive migratory balance among young adults despite demographic ageing

We may begin by considering changes in the age structures. The diagram below highlights changes in the weight of every age group between 1989 and 1999 for men and women.

Figure 3.6 Variation in the weight of age group between 1989 and 1999



A distortion is observable in the age structure that generally contributes to demographic ageing within the population: increase in the weight of every age group from 50 years old for men, and 40 years old for women. In contrast with this ageing, the rise in number within the 20-29 age group results in a higher percentage of young adults in the total population. As long as ageing by ten years between 1989 and 1999 of the young 10-19 age group alone cannot explain its growth in the entire population, the situation that the diagram shows will be interpreted as the result of migration, whose net balance favours Kenya. On the contrary, despite the presence of young adults at family starting age, the representativeness of the figures from 0 to 19 years old decreases, which can be explained mechanically by the distortion of the structure of advanced ages, as well as the relatively low fertility among people of procreating age. The growth in weight of women between 40 to 50 years old is also observable. This growth cannot be explained by ageing among the women alone.

Increase in number of “Indians” at the expense of “Asian Kenyans”

Another interesting change between 1989 and 1999 was the change in the structure from the point of view of the “tribe/nationality” variable. During censuses, this variable presents an opportunity for indigenous Africans to state their ethnicity⁴⁰. It can also be a means for people of

(40) During the census, the question asked was: “What is this person tribe?” It was recommended to the census surveyors that the people should be allowed to answer as they

Indian origin to indicate their Kenyan nationality (identity expressed by the term “Asian-Kenyan”) although – since it is not an obligation – this declaration cannot be considered a matter of fact (this issue has been discussed in Annex 1). People of Indian origin can also say they are “Indians” holding Kenyan citizenship. Finally, the census form makes it possible to declare to be “Pakistani” or “Other Asians” (but it is known that the numbers of the latter two categories are on average always very low).

It can be assumed that people who have retained their Indian or Pakistani nationality said they were “Indians” or “Pakistanis” (unless they tried to affirm their integration into the Kenyan society). In contrast, one can hardly imagine the options taken by people with dual nationality (Indian and Kenyan⁴¹); or those seeking to cling to their Indian origin, despite their Kenyan nationality (acquired recently perhaps), in order to preserve their cultural inheritance. Finally, let’s mention that even though the “Other Asians” category probably includes a majority of people from other regions of the Indian sub-continent, it absolutely does not guarantee that everyone falls under it (See Annex 1).

Taking into account the quality of enumeration in 1989, it is sufficient to compare 1999 and 1989 data considering only relative figures. Contrary to relative stability – or slight increase – in the total number of “Indians” between the last two censuses, it is observed that the distribution of individuals based on the “tribes” variable changed distinctly during the inter-census period.

The table shows that the weight of “Kenyan Asians” decreased by nearly 10 points between 1989 and 1999, whereas the proportion of other nationals, notably “Pakistanis”, increased significantly (by close to 50% or more than 1,000 declared individuals in 1999). Does this change indicate a trend that results from a sustained migration current – but which went unnoticed due to lack of variation in the numbers between the two censuses? Or does it reflect a new “identity sensitivity” from a significant number of people who would have taken advantage of the 1999 census to affirm their Indian origin?

wish: “For Kenyan tribes, code using the tribe code list. Accept the answer as given to you without question. For Kenyans of other origins use the codes are provided. For example, persons originating from Asia should be coded ‘46’”.

(41) Is this scenario possible? In principle, Kenyan law does not allow a person to hold two passports.

Table 3.13 Evolution of the variable *Tribes* between 1989 and 1999

	1989 Official data (published)	1989 Data from the files	1999 Official data and data from the files
Kenyan Asians	59,4%	60,5%	50,0%
Indians	32,6%	33,2%	40,0%
Pakistanis	2,1%	2,0%	3,0%
Other Asians	5,9%	4,4%	7,0%
TOTAL	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%
<i>Calculation based on...</i>	89185	82905	89310

Sources: CBS

The census data cannot provide an answer to the second hypothesis. In contrast, the change in age structures according to the “tribes” variable shows that the first hypothesis needs serious consideration. Indeed, a look at the tables below shows that the ageing of among “Indian” and “Pakistani” groups is lower than ageing among “Asians” in general⁴². Women classified as “Other Asians” were observed to be younger.

Table 3.14 Evolution of the average age of segmented sub-populations according to the *Tribes* variable between 1989 and 1999 (in year)

	Kenyan Asians	Indians	Pakistanis	Other Asians	All
Men	+1,7	+1,2	+0,5	+0,4	+1,4
Women	+2	+1,3	+0,5	-0,8	+1,6
Men and women	+1,8	+1,2	+1	-0,1	+1,5

Sources: CBS

The “Kenyan Asians” category definitely represents a category whose average age increased most certainly during the last ten years (to a point that it weighed – due to its demographic volume – on the average age of the entire diaspora). This ageing can be explained by a little increase in the weight of young adults aged between 20 and 29 years old, an age group whose unique change in age structure between 1989 and 1999 we saw

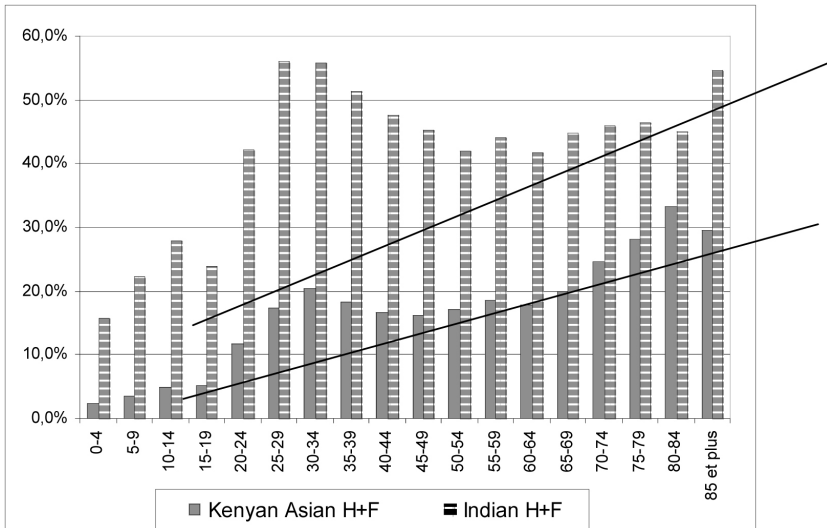
(42) The rumour (statistically unverifiable) had it that there were many Pakistanis among the recent immigrants or “rockets”, some of them being clandestine. The same is true of Southern Indians, Sri Lankans, etc.

above (Graph 5). An examination of the “Indian” group’s age structure shows that the weight of the 0-19 year-olds shrank between 1989 and 1999 while that the 20-29 year-olds grew by 2 points (18.1 to 20.1%). At the same time, the “Kenyan Asian” group only gained 0.2 points, growing from 15.7 to 15.9%. Within the same age category, progression was still higher among “Pakistani” men and “Other Asian” women between 1989 and 1999. These changes are consequently in competition with ageing among “Kenyan Asians”. Moreover, between 30 and 39 years old, the proportion of “Kenyan Asians” decreased among both men and women, and increased among “Indian” men (see Annex 2). Such characteristics mitigate in favour of positive migratory balance between 20 and 29 years old, or even up to 40 years old. Even though we cannot rule out young adults leaving Kenya for other countries (this is indeed verified considering increased numbers of young people studying abroad), the number of those who choose to settle in the country therefore seems higher than those who left. Some of the newly arrived would therefore be “Indians” and not “Kenyan Asians”, which explains the decrease observed in the weight of the latter. The fact remains that the increase by about 10 points, in ten years, of the “Indians” category at the expense of “Kenyan Asians” could nevertheless be attributed to factors other than this migration. It would therefore be needed to turn to other hypotheses, particularly self-identification that is specific to every individual.

“Asian Kenyans” and “Indians”

Further census data confirmed that “Kenyan Asians” and “Indians” (sticking to the two sub-communities that account for 90% of the entire population classified in under the “Asians” group) had two distinct categories, each of them with a different migration history. Apart from the factors that have just been mentioned, the proportion of people born outside Kenya was thus twice higher in 1999 among “Indians” than among “Kenyan Asians” (60.6% for “Indians” compared to 28.5% for “Kenyan Asians”). This double “identity” link actually confirms that there is a correlation between stated ethnicity and citizenship.

Figure 3.7 proportion in age group of *Kenyan Asians* and *Indians* declaring to be born in Indian during the 1999 census (%)



Among various countries of birth of “Indians”, India is mentioned three out of four times⁴³. 40.3% of “Indians” were born in India as opposed to 12.6% of “Kenyan Asians”.

In every age category, those who described themselves as “Indians” were more often born in India than the so-called “Kenyan Asians” (graph above). For the latter, the more advanced their age was, the higher the likelihood of being born in India: three in ten of the oldest “Kenyan Asians” were born in India. In contrast, the younger the “Kenyan Asians” the less the frequency, particularly before the age of 20: more than 95% of them having indeed been born in Kenya.

For those who described themselves as “Indians”, the variation in ratio of those born in India follows a scale that is similar to that of “Kenyan Asians”. In contrast, these same proportions are higher whatever the age group. Between 40 and 55% of “Indians” above 20 years of age were born in India. Between 20 and 50 years of age, the percentage was even higher, testifies which therefore of sustained migration as mentioned previously.

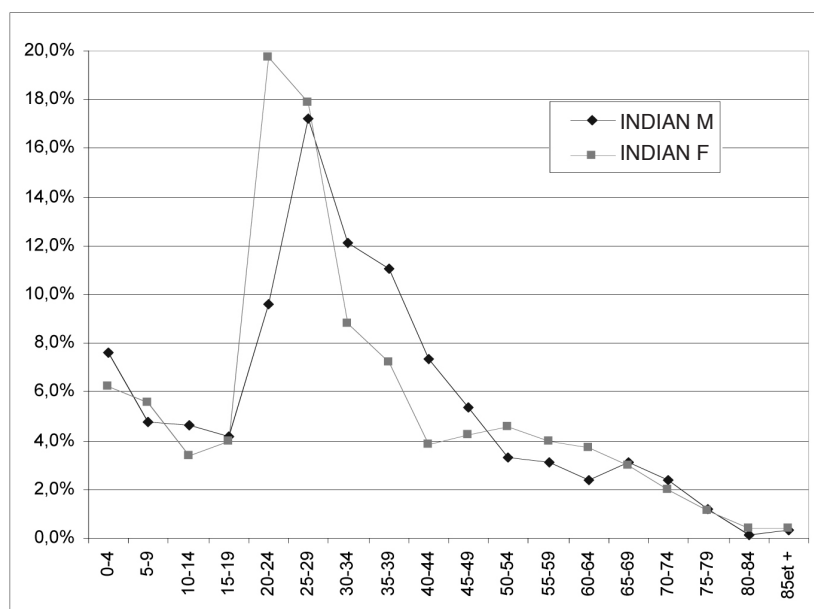
Data on residence of people one year before the census shows further differences between “Indians” and “Kenyan Asians”. These differences are consistent with previous results on places of birth. Whereas the proportion of “Indians” who said they were living abroad in 1998

(43) If the code Sudan actually corresponds to India – See Annex 1.

(one year before the census) was 7.7%, this percentage did not exceed 4.3% for “Kenyan Asians”⁴⁴. Such data confirms a correlation between the self-determined ethnic identity and the period since arrival in the country. Among these “11th hour” migrants, 14.6% of “Kenyan Asians” previously lived on the Indian sub-continent. But this proportion reached 49.8% among new “Indian” residents, 53.6% among “Pakistanis” and 58.4% among “Other Asians”. The age distribution of these people also shows that most of the migrations take place from the age of 15 up to 45 years old, with the peak being attained earlier among the girls than among boys.

It can be observed that the curves dip very quickly beyond 25 years old. Considering the persistently tender age of marriage, one may think that at least a section of feminine immigration (and maybe to a lesser a section of masculine immigration as well) took place as a result of marriage proposals⁴⁵.

Figure 3.8 Distribution per age of Indians declaring to be living in India one year before 1999



(44) Among “Pakistanis” and “Other Asians”, the percentages are even higher, 8.1% and 12.0 %.

(45) See the chapter by Michel Adam on family and marriages.

Figure 3.9 Age of Indians declaring to be living in India during the 1999 census

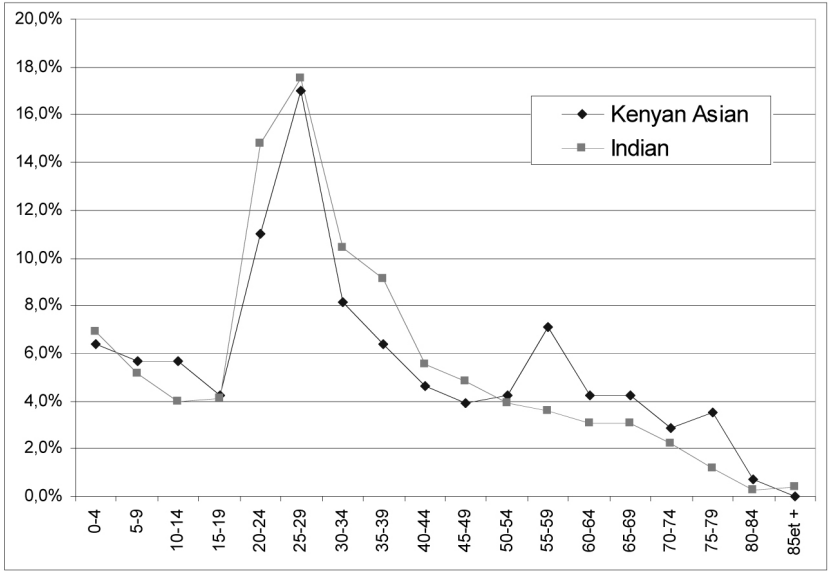
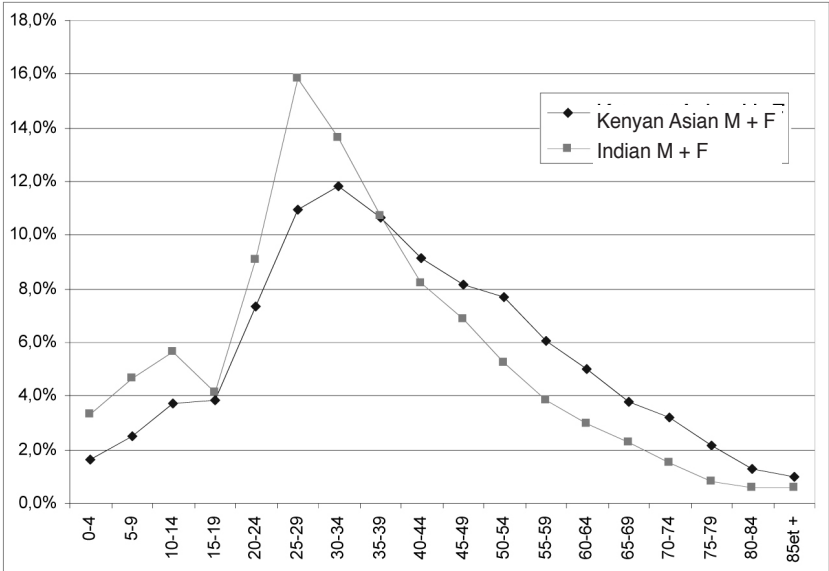


Figure 3.10 Distribution per age of Indians declaring to be living in India in 1998, one year before the 1999 census



Indians in Uganda

Uganda was a British protectorate from 1894 to 1962. The country then went through a tumultuous period, experiencing one inter-ethnic conflict after another, particularly under Idi Amin Dada's dictatorial rule (1971-1979) and during the second Obote administration (1980-1985)⁴⁶. Many Ugandans endured military violence under the two regimes that were characterized by all sorts of political assassinations and massacres (the victims of atrocities between these two governments is estimated at ranging between 150,000 and 600,000). Targeted by both Amin Dada's vindictiveness and a xenophobic decision to expel them, Indians were forced to leave the country in mass in 1972⁴⁷.

As Indians were at the time playing a major role in manufacturing and business, their expulsion considerably weakened the country's economy. Handed over to influential people in government, companies and businesses previously owned by members of the Indian diaspora were soon grinding to a halt as shortages, looting⁴⁸, black market (*magendo*)⁴⁹ and corruption became rife.

In the early 1980s (under Obote's government), several hundreds of Indians returned to Uganda with plans to reclaim their property, which had been sequestered by a state-controlled organ (Departed Asians Properties Custodian Board or DAPCB). At the end of 1985, some of the Indians had to endure fresh violence in the looting that followed the fall of the Obote regime.

It took the consolidation of Yoweri Museveni's presidency (1988-89) for Indian presence in the country to be assured of guaranteed protection to enable them to progressively rebuild the former communities, which is only partly done currently.

We mentioned in the introduction of this chapter that no statistics on the Indian diaspora had been released since the 1969 census. After numerous unsuccessful attempts, we managed to secure the Uganda Bureau of Statistics' (UBOS) agreement to provide information we had requested. Although very incomplete, this data was part of the initial

(46) See Calas (1991: 28-39).

(47) On August 4, 1972, Amin Dada decreed the expulsion of Indians within 90 days, claiming that God had ordered him to do it. The series of events have been detailed in Gérard Prunier (1990).

(48) Calas (1991: 29).

(49) Nabuguzi (1991: 134-140).

information released since the 1972 events. Before giving an account of this data we will, like we did for Tanzania and Kenya, delve into a description of the changes in the Indian population in Uganda during the period preceding independence.

Indian presence in Uganda up to 1972

Various historical sources attest to the presence of Indian traders in Buganda and in the Great Lakes region by the 19th century. At the turn of the 20th century, the establishment of the British protectorate contributed to the arrival of a wave of traders and employees who were required to work in the colonial administration. Like in Tanzania and Kenya, the Indians' level of education and their language skills, which enabled them to communicate in English, gave them some advantage over the Africans.

Organized in multiple communities, the immigrants established themselves in a society where ethnic relations between Africans were described as complex due to their political and cultural differences and the privileged support the British accorded to the Baganda people, an ethnic community living in central and southern parts of Uganda, along the shores of Lake Victoria⁵⁰.

Table 3.15 Respective size of Asian, European and African populations living in Uganda (1914-1969)

	Asians (1)	Europeans (2)	Africans (3)	(1)/(2)	(1)/(3) X 1000
1914	3651	1017	2 500 000 (*)	3,6	1
1921	4700 (*)	1269	2 847 735	3,7	2
1931	14150	2001	3 525 014	7,1	4
1941	18381	2186	3 844 981	8,4	5
1948	35215	3448	4 917 555	10,2	7
1959	71933	10866	6 449 558	6,6	11
1969	74308	9533	9 442 558	7,8	8

Sources: UBOS (1991) and East African Statistical Department – Non-African population, 1948, 1959. Statistics on the Asians include people of Indian, Pakistani and Goan origin if the distinction was made.

(*) Author's estimates

(50) Like other authors, Prunier (1990: 48, 58) brings out the poor social relations between Indians and Africans. He also mentions the complex relations between the British and the Indians, which resulted from both complementarity and rivalry.

During the entire protectorate period, British presence remained low in Uganda, unlike in neighbouring Kenya where thousands had settled, particularly in the fertile areas of the highlands. The low European population, the distance from the sea, and lower urban development limited the number of Indian immigrants. Just before WWI, there were 3,651 Indians in Uganda (1914 census) while they were already three times more in Kenya. This gap (1 to 3) between the two countries remained the same in the years that followed, with Uganda having a population of 14,150 Indians in 1931 against 43,623 in Kenya the same year.

Data from the censuses indicate an uninterrupted growth in the Indian population during the period between 1914 and 1969, reaching the maximum figure of 74,308 in 1969 (which was also a census year). In his article, Gérard Prunier suggests different estimates, exceeding 82,100 people in 1963, the year the country gained independence. Although the latter figure is not attributed to any source (in this regard, one can ask if these are revised estimates of the official figures released in 1959, considering undeclared immigration), Prunier explains the decrease in figures between 1963 and 1969 by the fact that some Indians had begun to leave the country, sensing unfavourable political changes. However, one may question the plausibility of this hypothesis, considering the supposed high growth in the figures between 1959 and 1963, just like the decline between 1963 and 1969 (7,800 people or 9.5% of the 1963 figures).

Indians and British in Uganda

Until 1972, the population originating from the Indian subcontinent grew much more rapidly than the European population in Uganda – 91% of which were British subjects in 1948. That same year (1948), there were over 10 “Indians” for every European in the country. In contrast, the Indian/European ratio in Kenya never went beyond 4 to 1 during the entire 20th century⁵¹. In Uganda, the growth of the Indian population was also faster than the growth of the African population. There were up to 11 “Indians” for every 1,000 African in 1959 (compared to 1 ‰ in 1914), ratios that are reminiscent of the situation observed in Kenya⁵².

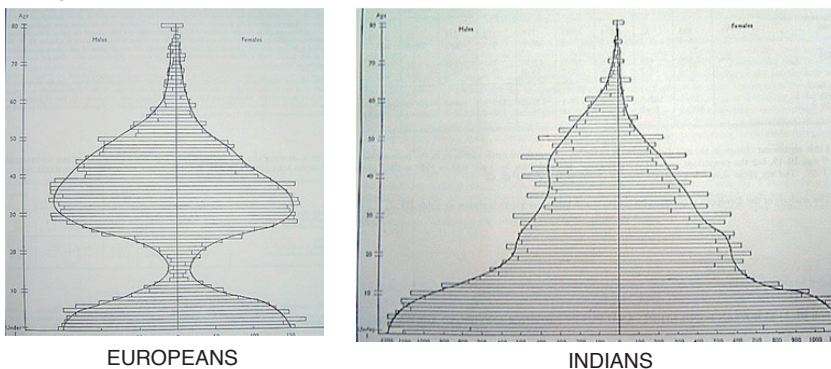
(51) In his article, Prunier also underlines this difference between Uganda and Kenya. He sees it as a possible explanation of the British settlers' hostility towards Indians in Kenya.

(52) Even though there are certain similarities between the Indian populations in the two countries, it is quite different when it comes to the Arab population. In Uganda, Arabs have always been a tiny minority; they were only 515 in 1931 and 1946 in 1959.

Finally, the British never established a large population in Uganda, with the highest population at about ten thousand recorded or estimated around 1960. The subjects of the Crown especially came to Uganda to serve in the protectorate administration. In 1948, less than 10% were born there. Unlike the Indians (and even a good number of white settlers in Kenya), the British in Uganda were in the modern sense of the term “expatriate” civil servants who held short-term posts and were sure to soon return to Europe.

A study of the age structures of Europeans and Indians confirms the distinct nature of these two sub-sets. The British were mostly above 25 years old and the 8-22 year-old age group were almost non-existent. They comprised couples without children or with young children. In contrast, the Indians had a pyramid age structure which indicates their situation of permanent immigrants who are bound to the country by retraceable family ties (see Figure 3.11 below).

Figure 3.11 Age structure of European and Indian populations living in Uganda in 1959



Source: East African Statistical Department, Uganda Protectorate, Uganda Census 1959, Non-African Population. Pyramid on the left represents the European population and the pyramid on the right represent the Indian or Pakistani population (men on the left, women on the right). Photos by the author from an original booklet available at UBOS.

The 1948 census gives indications of the economic activities of the Indian diaspora. With the exception of a small minority of singles (137 in number), women were absent in the work market. 50% of men were engaged in wholesale or retail business, 29% in manufacturing plants or maintenance and repair companies, 8% were active in textile companies and 5% were employed in the public service. Despite the economic importance of the investments they made, a very small number of families were involved in agriculture (2% of the assets). This is the case

of two famous families, the Madhvani and the Mehta, who were owners of big tracts of land known to be leading suppliers of sugarcane⁵³.

The 1948 census does not specify religion, with the exception of two main groups: Hindus (24%) and Ismailis (17%). The unusual mention of the *Vaishya* (19%) in a census questionnaire obviously concerns the largest Hindu sub-group (therefore included in this group within which it is one of the main *Varna*⁵⁴). The Ismailis are known to have played an important economic role in Uganda before 1972. Since then, thanks to the strength of businesses and Aga Khan Foundations in East Africa, the Ismaili community is still economically active in Uganda⁵⁵.

Migration of Indians in Uganda and age structures

Due to lack of data on this subject, it is not possible to know the number of Indian arrivals and departures in Uganda from the beginning of the 20th century until 1972. However, change in the age structures (showing ageing of little significance over these decades) tends to demonstrate that not all Indians finally settled in Uganda when they first migrated there. After staying in the country for a somewhat long period of time, some of them presumably left and were replaced by others.

The relatively constant age structure is also the result of a high fertility rate and relatively low life expectancy. In the 1948 census, 50 to 54 year-old Indian women, born and living in Uganda said they had given birth to 6 children per woman (5.4 children per woman for those born abroad). The high fertility rate goes hand in hand with the high rate of marriages. In 1948, only 1% of women aged over 20 years old (but not exceeding 25 years old) were still single, and only 3% of them were widowed (marriage among widowed women is prohibited in principle among Hindus).

(53) Prunier (1990: 41) emphasizes the role played by Indians in Ugandan agriculture, another difference when compared to Indians in Kenya. However, it is notable that even in Uganda, only a small minority of Indians were involved in agricultural activities as employers (engaging African workers), but never as independent producers and not in the least as salaried employees. See the introductory chapter of this volume.

(54) *Varna*: status rank that brings together a number of castes (*jāti*) among the Hindus. Third in the labour division hierarchy (after the Brahmins and the Kshatrya), the *Varna* of *Vaishyas* represents the category of traders and farmers, who are the majority in East Africa. Hindus do not usually talk about their *Varna* status, but only about their caste. It is therefore surprising that the British administration used this in a document intended to be a population record. For a more detailed explanation of the caste issue, turn also to the introductory chapter of this collection.

(55) In August 2007, the Aga Khan and President Museveni jointly laid the foundation stone of the Bujagali-Naminya hydroelectric power station, a project funded by the Aga Khan Economic Development Fund and the World Bank.

The high numerical imbalance between men and women also contributes to maximal first-time marriage since, on the “marriage market”, men are numerically superior and much older. The table below shows that the sex ratio imbalance only began to reduce from 1959, except for the older age groups: women newly settled in Uganda arrived young at an age when they could embrace married life, and moreover were perhaps already sought as wives by their future families-in-law⁵⁶.

Table 3.16 Evolution of age structure and sex ratio of Asians between 1931 and 1969

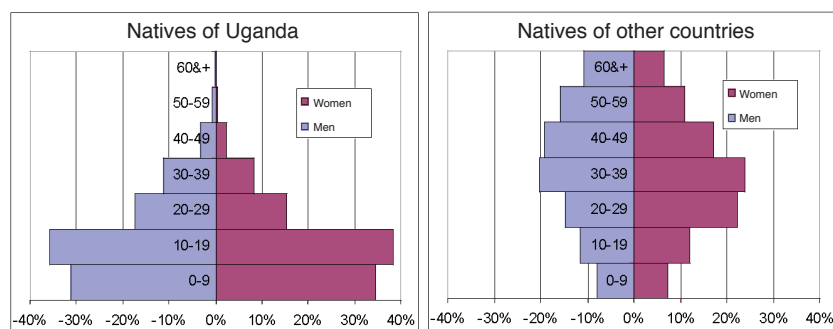
	1931		1948		1959		1969	
	Structure	Sex Ratio	Structure	Sex Ratio	Structure	Sex Ratio	Structure	Sex Ratio
0-9	26%	97	35%	102	34%	104	22%	103
10-19	15%	130	19%	102	22%	107	26%	104
20-29	31%	220	17%	97	16%	95	17%	99
30-39	17%	460	15%	169	12%	111	15%	111
40-49	7%	309	9%	331	9%	150	9%	128
50-59	2%	355	3%	398	5%	271	6%	158
60&+	1%	261	2%	197	2%	207	4%	181
Age Undefined	2%	283	0%	104	0%	113		
Total	100%	189	100%	126	100%	113	100%	111

Source: Ugandan censuses. Sex ratio is calculated by dividing the number of men by the number of women for each age group (multiplied by 100)

Table 3.16 shows slow ageing by age structure. Those over 40 year old were 10% in 1931, 14% in 1948, 15% eleven years later, and reached 19% late in 1969. In its 1959 census analysis, the East African Statistical Department observes moreover that, due to its “youth”, the Indian population was in a way uncharacteristic, compared to age structures of Indians in other countries under British influence. For example, the 35% under 10 year-olds in Uganda in 1948 is only comparable to 26% similar age group among Indians in Egypt in 1947; 14% over 40 year-olds among Indians in Uganda comparable to 23% similar age group among Indians in Egypt.

(56) On this subject, see the chapter by Michel Adam on family and marriages.

Figure 3.12 Age structures of Indians living in Uganda in 1969



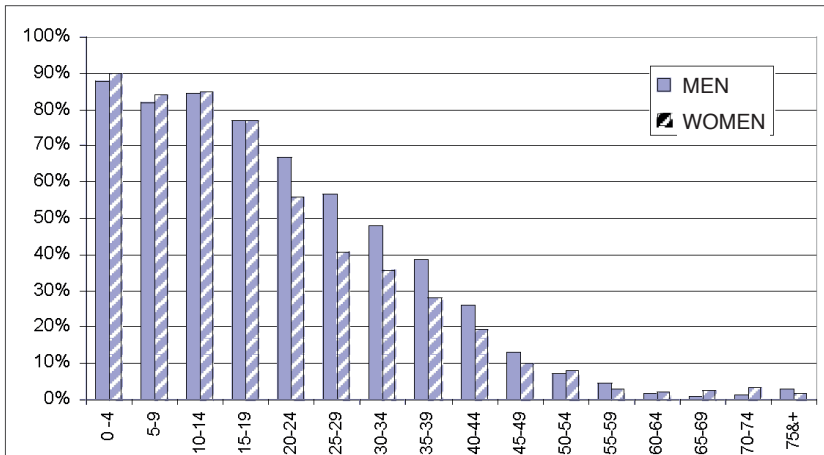
Source: UBOS, Report on the 1969 Population Census – Each histogram represents 100 % of the men and 100 % of the women. The 60 and more age group is assimilated to a decadal group for the sake of calculation.

The differences in age structures between Indians born in Uganda and expatriate Indians is another indication of constant Indian migration into the country. Whereas 42% of them had been born in a country other than Uganda, “expatriate” Indians were until 1969 still characterized by their relative youth, thus a testimony of recent arrival in the country – until just before the 1972 expulsions.

Nevertheless, the number of Indians born in Uganda rose over the years with an inversely proportional frequency in age. In the 1969 census, close to 6 out of 10 Indians resident in Uganda had been born within the country but did not necessarily hold Ugandan nationality⁵⁷. The graph below shows that beyond 20 years old, fewer and fewer women had been born in Uganda than men, most of them having arrived later in country. This is a visible phenomenon in the preceding pyramids. After 50 years old, higher male mortality destabilized the numerical relationship between men and women.

(57) This is what makes the 1972 expulsions even more dramatic, as it significantly targeted Indians born in the country who had more often than not lost ties with the country of their ancestors.

Figure 3.13 Number of Indian men and women born in Uganda according to their age in 1969



In 1969, the 31,308 Indians not born in Uganda had come from India (69%), but also a notable percentage from Kenya (20%), and to a lesser extent from Tanzania (6%). These statistics confirm migration between the three East African countries around this time, which we have already demonstrated.

Like in Kenya, Indian settlers in Uganda opted for towns

Indians in Uganda are unequally distributed in the country's four large regions. In 1959, 54% lived in Buganda, 36% in the eastern region, while only 4% and 6% lived in the country's north and west respectively (Europeans were also remarkably distributed in the same manner).

Like in Tanzania and Kenya, Indians were concentrated in urban centres, the base of their economic activity. Gérard Prunier recalls that Indians of the emerging city of Kampala were in 1921 a third of the total population (954 out of 2821)⁵⁸. In 1959, three big towns hosted half of the Indian community (49.7%), namely Kampala (22,268), Jinja (8,883) and Mbale (4,575). The rest of the diaspora resided mainly in the three other big towns of Masaka, Soroti and Tororo. At the same time, 62 % of Indians lived in big towns with a non-African population of above 500 people. However, all Indian communities did not equally settle in urban areas. Thus 41% of Goans resided in Kampala. This percentage fell to

(58) Prunier (1990: 44).

31% for people from other regions of India and 23% for immigrants from Pakistan.

The country's first few years of independence did not change this geographical distribution. In 1969, 56% of Indians lived in Buganda, three quarters of them being settled in the Kampala area, while 33% lived in the eastern region, including a third in Jinja. 11% of members of the diaspora lived in northern and western regions.

Image 3.5 Photograph of a Jinja street in 2005: Former Indian shops



Source: Author's photograph, January 2005.

The Indian population in Uganda also exhibited other characteristics of modern life. Indeed, like in Kenya, Indians were relatively well educated with a higher rate of schooling in 1969 than Indians in Kenya in 1999, among men and children aged over 10 years old and girls between 10 and 19 years old (see the table below 3.5). Even though there is no guarantee that the data is reliable, the high figures shows a level of education strongly higher than that of the African population, a situation that remained globally the same two decades later, as confirmed by the 1991 census data (*infra*)⁵⁹.

(59) In 1969, it is likely that the rate of schooling among women aged over 30 years old was an approximate assessment, since the figures were established based on the declarations of the enumerated people and data compiled by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS).

Table 3.14 Proportion of the Indian population in Uganda according to levels of education in 1969

	Going to school			Left school			Never been to school		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
5-9 years old	81%	79%	80%	1%	1%	0%	18%	20%	19%
10-14	94%	95%	94%	1%	2%	2%	5%	3%	4%
15-19	78%	69%	74%	18%	29%	24%	4%	2%	3%
20-24	21%	9%	15%	77%	88%	82%	2%	3%	3%
25-29	2%	1%	1%	96%	94%	95%	2%	5%	4%
30 +	0%	13%	6%	91%	75%	84%	9%	12%	10%

Source: UBOS, 1969 Population Census.

Changes in the Indian Population since 1972

How many Indians were really expelled from Uganda by Amin Dada in 1972? Due to lack of statistical data, it is impossible to provide an accurate answer to this question. Historians nevertheless share the thinking that a large majority of members of the diaspora was forced to leave. Debates focus on the number (necessarily low) of families that managed to stay put (500 people according to Bernard Calas and 300 according to Tom Forrest)⁶⁰. In addition, authors continue to discuss the number of Indians that were in the country in 1972: 50,000 according to Tom Forrest (in total contradiction with the census results and other figures published elsewhere by the author)⁶¹; up to 80,000 according to Edward Khiddu-Makubuya, considering that 6,000 people were left out in data collection during the previous census⁶².

According to Tom Forrest, 1,000 Indians began to return to the country from 1989. He says that the returnees were mainly Ismailis, who before 1972 held privileged positions in the Ugandan economy (Forrest, 1999: 84)⁶³.

(60) Calas (1991: 29); Forrest (1999: 76-90).

(61) According to Forrest (1999), there were 85,000 to 90,000 Indians resident in Uganda in 1970, two years before the expulsions. If 50,000 of them were expelled, no more than 50 families remained in the country after the events as claimed by the author. On the contrary, if this figure of 50 families were retained, it would indicate that the number of those expelled would exceed 50,000 by far.

(62) United Nations (1994).

(63) The 1991 census puts the number of Muslims at 39%. Hindus having not been identified as such, it can be assumed that they appear in the "Other religions" category which

Lessons from the 1991 Census

The 1991 census data⁶⁴ makes it possible to carry out a hindsight assessment of the scale of the expulsions as well as the number of returnees in the years that followed President Museveni's ascent to power.

The statistical documents provided by the UBOS indicate that there were 2,292 Indians in the file for individuals and 2,694 in the file for accommodation. This gap in number is a result of the fact that the UBOS did not include in its file for individuals people born in India who said they had an "ethnic origin" other than "Indian" or "Pakistani". The file for accommodation brings a section of these people to light. Thus, considering that there were people left out in the census, it can be reasoned that the number of Indians in Uganda in 1991 was around 3,000.

Out of the 2,292 individuals in the file for individuals, 925 (or 40% of them) said they were Ugandan-born⁶⁵. In addition, 624 people, 583 of them born in the country, said they had always lived in Uganda⁶⁶. Analysis of the variable "length of stay (in the district)" for the other 1,668 Indians (2,292-624) who had not always resided in Uganda shows that in 1991 they had lived in the country for a relatively short time, less than three years for half of them. Even while assuming some of these people had previously moved from one place to another within Uganda, a study of these figures reveals that most of the enumerated people had recently arrived in the country. On the contrary, the number of people who that year (1991) had lived in the district for over 20 years (except for the already considered case of those born in the country) did not exceed 159. Were this data accurate, it would indicate that the number of Indians who remained in Uganda after the 1972 expulsions – and were still alive in 1991 – could not exceed 783 people (624+159). However, since the accuracy of what people told census takers cannot be ascertained, nor can the deaths of those who remained in Uganda, it is preferable to suggest as a figure an inclusive range of between 600 and 900. Thus, the previous estimates advanced by Bernard Calas (500) appear relatively consistent and close in any case to those arrived at in our own calculations. Moreover, it goes without saying that a debate on

comprises 44% of Indians (variable P05 of the census).

- (64) We refer here to the only data that was sent to us by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics.
- (65) It should be recalled that the last census before the expulsion of Indians from Uganda (1969) showed that a third of the population, about 26,000 people, had been born in the country.
- (66) The difference between 624 and 583 raises interrogation but the census data is only "declaratory".

just a few hundreds of people elicits limited interest. Interpreting the results of the 1991 census only confirms in a more statistically rigorous manner the massive nature of the 1972 expulsions, which all observers had already indicated. Other publications could detail the conditions that enabled a tiny minority to stay in the country against all expectations.

“Returnees” or fresh migration?

In his 1999 article, Tom Forrest contends that several hundreds Indians who were expelled in 1972 made their way back to Uganda, mostly from countries where they had found prior refuge, notably the United Kingdom, Canada, India and Kenya. Suffice it to say that the 1991 census left little room for assumption that there were returnees from Western countries. Immigrants then only made rare reference to the West. Thus only 19 of them said they had lived in Great Britain, and even less said they had lived in Canada (8 people). In contrast, 124 people said they had resided in Kenya. The vast majority of the immigrants said they had come from India and Pakistan, 925⁶⁷ and 133 respectively. The latter accounted for 56% of all the residents who lived before in countries other than Uganda.

Table 3.15 Distribution of Ugandan Indians in 1991 according to the place of their last residence and their number of years spent in Uganda (in the same district)

Before last place of residence (P11)	Number of years spent in Uganda (same district) (P10)					Total
	Less than 5 years	5 to 9 years	10 to 20 years	More than 20 years	Natives	
Uganda	222	56	59	60	12	403
Kampala	70	8	6	12	1	97
Kenya	79	10	17	9	9	124
Tanzania	5	1	4	4	0	13
Other African countries	14	6	5	3	0	27
United Kingdom	11	3	1	1	3	19

(67) The 925 people who resided in India before settling in Uganda should not be confused with the 925 Indians who previously said they had been born in Uganda (numerical coincidence). Among the 925 people born in Uganda, 292 had resided in the country for less than 21 years (32%). These could therefore be the returnees mentioned by Forrest (1999).

Before last place of residence (P11)	Number of years spent in Uganda (same district) (P10)					Total
	Less than 5 years	5 to 9 years	10 to 20 years	More than 20 years	Natives	
Other European countries	6	1	0	0	0	7
India	615	142	88	61	22	925
Pakistan	69	17	30	14	4	133
Other Asian countries	15	3	0	0	2	20
Middle East	10	7	0	0	0	17
Canada	5	3	0	0	0	8
USA	3	1	0	0	1	5
Other American countries	1	0	0	0	0	1
Born in Uganda	0	0	0	0	568	568
NR	6	3	3	7	3	22
Total	1061	253	207	159	624	2292

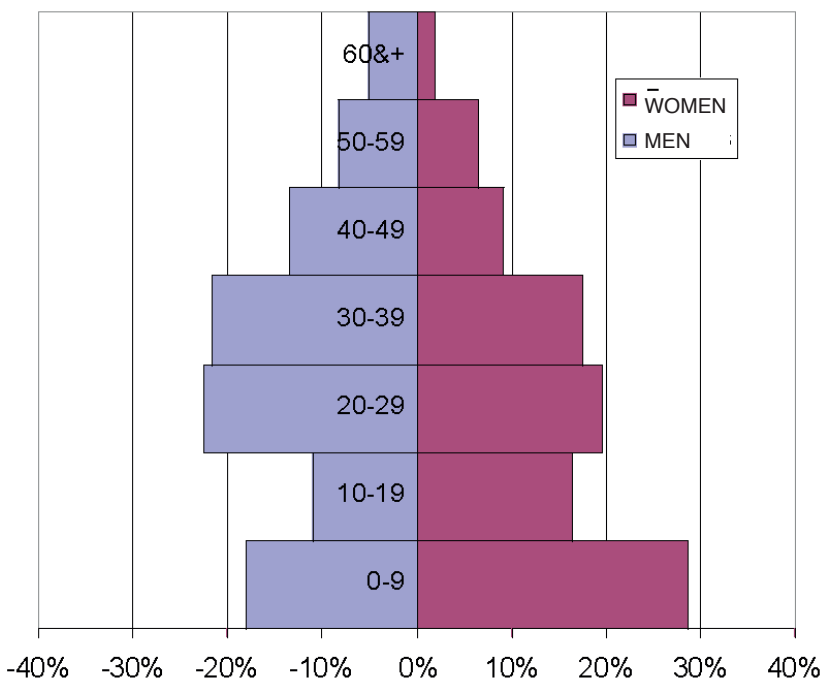
Source : UBOS, Uganda Census, 1991

Considering the age of Indians who lived in Uganda in the 1990s, the assumption of massive return of the 1972 expellees is also ruled out. Those enumerated in 1991 are first and foremost characterized by their youth⁶⁸. This is particularly the case of women: 82% of women (compared to 71% of men) were below 40 years old in 1991. Could these have been the returnees' children? The hypothesis, if it has any basis, is only verifiable for some of the figures, seeing that 30% of men and 45% of women were not born in 1972. If there were returnees, they would appear among over 40 year-old immigrants, who represent less than a quarter of the Indians.

(68) Indian migrants in the 20-39 year-old age group who had been staying in Uganda for less than 10 years (those who arrived between 1982 and 1991) were 53% in 1981, while those who arrived in the previous decade were 43%, and those who had been resident in the country for 21 years or more were 33%. If we calculate the same percentages without including those under 20 years old (since they were not yet born 20 years ago), the recently arrived migrants tend to be even more significantly young: 70%, 51% and 33% respectively between 20 and 39 years old during the mentioned periods of time.

With a masculinity ratio of 1:6, the 1991 Indian population moreover appeared to be a “selected” population, which is typical of recently arrived migrant populations. Some families were in the processes of formation (with less than 300 under the age of 10 to 19 years old and 500 under 10 years old). However, the proportion of single men remained high. Thus 13% of the men said they were “heads” of households while 47% of them and 15 year-old youths were variously aggregated in composite households (including parents or non-parents), with some households having only male adults.

Figure 3.14 Age structure of Indians living in Uganda in 1991



Source: UBOS, The 1991 Population and Housing Census

Urban base, and high social and professional positions

Despite the 1972 events that separate two distinct periods in the history of the Indian diaspora in Uganda, its current geographical distribution in 1991 showed some similarities with the situation in 1969. The western and northern regions (6% and 2% respectively) attracted few “Indian” immigrants to settle, unlike the eastern region, close to the Kenyan border with an easier link to the capital and the Indian Ocean coast

(29% of the population). 63% of the diaspora is now concentrated in the central region (as opposed to 56% in 1969), with 49% in Kampala district alone. Like in other East African countries, this distribution depends on the nature of activities they engage in. Only 1% of the enumerated men said they were engaged in a profession related to agriculture (75% of the entire Ugandan population). Professional activities, which are male-dominated within the diaspora (only 9% of the activities were said to involve women, mainly in business activities), are mainly divided between business, manufacturing industry and liberal professions. A quarter of those enumerated (26%) were engaged in various ways (bosses or employees) in small businesses, but more than a third held leading professional functions (18% of the general managers, 19% of liberal profession leaders), with only 17% occupying intermediate positions (employees and technicians). There is even a lower proportion (14%) for the manual professions (craftsmen and workers, including 5% mechanics). This data, corroborated by information on the immigrants' level of education, is testimony to a high degree of advanced qualifications. 77% of men and 70% of women in the above-16-year-old' category have at least been to high school (senior secondary). Within this group, 36% of men and 24% of women attended university for one or several years. Moreover, the level of education among recent immigrants is higher than among those who have been in the country for long.

Table 3.19 Distribution of Indians in 1991 according to their level of education and the number of years spent in Uganda

	Less than 10 years	10 to 20 years	21 years and more
None	7%	3%	20%
Primary school level	21%	31%	19%
Secondary school level	39%	46%	43%
University level	33%	20%	18%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Source : UBOS, 1991 Census

From the 1991 data to those of 2001

The 1991 census data are the most complete of all existing data on the Indian diaspora in Uganda – currently available data from the 2001 census only had people who explicitly said they were of “Asian” origin (“Asians” in Uganda)⁶⁹.

In 1991, 40% of “Indians” in Uganda (including Ugandan citizens and foreigners) were born in the country. The 2001 census mentions 8,818 people of Indian origin who said they were not Ugandan nationals, 26.5% of them born in Uganda (2,340 out of 8,818). It is not possible to reliably estimate the percentage of “Indians” holding Ugandan nationality while aligning the same percentage of people born in Uganda to that of 1991 (40%). If this were the case, the entire the “Indian” community would be underestimated at about 2,000 people: $(2,340 + 2,000) / (8,818 + 2,000) = 40\%$. Considering this uncertainty – and considering the percentage of the people who were not enumerated – “Indian” population for 2001 can be estimated at around 10,000 people instead of 8,818 as announced by UBOS⁷⁰.

Whether or not we retain the low estimates by UBOS⁷¹, this population is growing at a high rate, probably due in part to illegal immigration, considering the high number of tourist visas issued to Indian and Pakistani citizens. Thus during the period between 1990 and 1994, the number of tourist visas multiplied three and a half times for Indians (1,062 to 3,509) and five-fold for Pakistanis (140 to 721)⁷². Tourist visas issued to Chinese or Japanese citizens or nationals of other Asian countries also increased, but to a lesser degree (two or three-fold). According to Tom Forrest, these undeclared immigrants generally stay for a few months in Uganda and use the resources they mobilize during the brief stay to leave for other destinations, like North America (Forrest

(69) As already mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the UBOS did not respond to our request to be sent digitalized “individual” data from the 2001 census whose release was delayed to 2005. The enumerated people indeed had two options: ethnic group or citizenship. There was a danger of double confusion in this procedure: 1) between the two terms stated above (Ugandan citizens of “Indian” descent then failing to mention their ancestry); 2) between ethnic group in its limited sense (“Asian”, according to popular reference in East Africa, more often than not means Indian or Pakistani) and ethnic group in the wider sense (Asian, which includes other parts of the sub-continent: Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, etc., or even other Asian countries: China, Japan, etc.). See UBOS, *2002 Uganda population and housing census, Main report*, 120 p., March 2005.

(70) A high estimate of 11,500 people would be acceptable. Forrest (1999) estimates that there were 9,000 “Indians” in Uganda in 1999.

(71) And unless we assume, and this would not be plausible, that there was a serious underestimation in 1991.

(72) *Uganda Statistical Abstract*, July 1996, “Tourist arrival by country of usual residence”, p. 24.

1999). This assumption is, however, countered in part by the actual increase in the number of residents, as mentioned previously.

Indian diaspora in Uganda in 2001

Apart from the numerical progression that has just been highlighted, available statistical data in 2001 hardly changes the broad picture of the Indian-Ugandan community from what can be seen in the 1991 census⁷³. There is confirmation or strengthening of certain trends. This is the same case for the high urban population or the high level of social and economic position. One can note, however, among the new trends, the growing proportion of women engaged in professional activities.

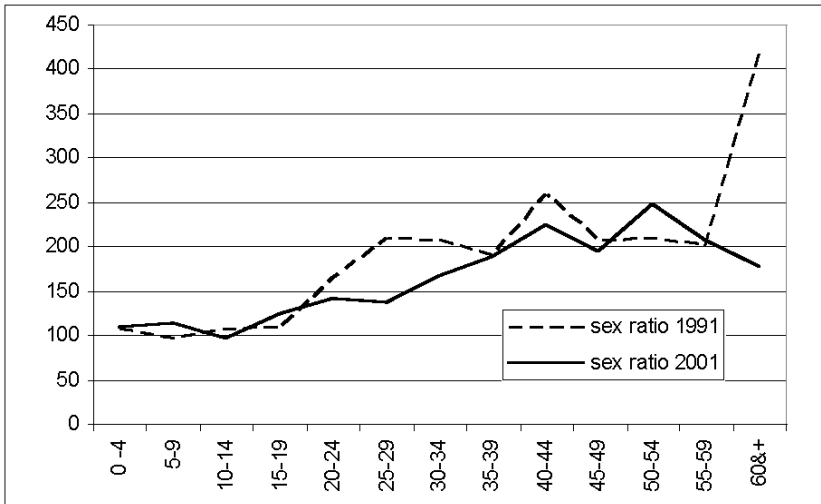
In the last decade (1991–2001), the average age among people of Indian origin generally stabilized. The growing migration maintained a demographic supply of youths that compensated the rate of ageing among the immigrants who were already in the country in 1991. In 2001, 3.4% of members of the community were aged 60 years old and above, an age group that had decreased by 0.4 points compared to 1991. The average age of the entire diaspora rose to 27.3 years old in 1991; it is now 27.5 years old. The male population, which was slightly younger in 2001 (29.0 years old in 2001; 29.5 years old in 1991), probably testifies to the immigration of young bachelors. In contrast, women have been ageing by an average 1.5 years (25.3 years old in 2001; 23.8 years old in 1991), a change that was due to the decrease in number of women below 20 (45.1% in 1991 compared to 38.5% in 2001).

The differential change in the two genders results in a slight rise in sex ratio within the under-10 and 15-19 year-old age groups. In contrast, the sex ratio within 25-34 years old experience a net decrease, implying ageing of the female population (notably among recent female immigrants). This data can be compared to the previous situation in which female immigrants were found. Should we conclude from this that the number of fiancées coming from the Indian sub-continent also significantly reduced, as claimed by informants? The under-5 year olds were fewer in 2001 than 10 years earlier due to the arrival of childless

(73) The UBOS sent us seven statistics tables that do not make it easy to specifically compare with the 1991 census results. The seven tables contain age, marital status, level of education, type of employment, religion, district of residence and country of birth statistics. The data on religion are unclear since the questionnaire does not explicitly indicate whether one belongs to the "African religions", "Muslim" or "Christian" category. Hindus appear nowhere as such, but are (as it would appear) included in a final category entitled "other non-Christian religions". As opposed to the situation in 1991, Indian Muslims were in 2001 more numerous than adherents to other religions: 34.2% compared to 30.3% in 1991.

young migrants, who were yet to make a family in the host country. The family structures observed in 1991 and 2001 experienced little change. The percentage of married people only increased by two points, with more men than women staying longer as singles due to their superior numbers (63% men within the over-20 year-old age group).

Figure 3.15 Sex ratio evolution according to age within the Ugandan Indian community in 1991 and 2001



Source: UBOS, 1991 and 2001 censuses

Table 3.20 Marital status of men and women of more than 10 years old among the Uganda Indian community in 1991 and 2001

	1991			2001		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Never married	38%	27%	34%	37%	27%	33%
Married	59%	67%	62%	61%	68%	64%
Widow	1%	3%	2%	1%	3%	1%
Divorced or separated	1%	3%	2%	1%	2%	1%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: UBOS, 1991 and 2001 censuses

Living in Uganda and foreign place of birth

“Indians” resident in Uganda had, by 2001, became even more concentrated in urban areas. 69% of them lived in the central region, with 59% living in the capital district of Kampala. The neighbouring districts of Wakiso, Mukono and Jinja, which are close to Lake Victoria, compose, together with Kampala, an area where three out of four “Indians” settled. Curiously, Jinja town – which distinguished itself for its high Indian population – did not live up to its previous reputation (from 21.7% of Indians resident in Uganda in 1959, it decreased to only 9.5% in 2001). After taking possession of Indian businesses in 1972, Africans kept their hold on the town. This is the same situation in Mbale (a town close to the Kenyan border), historically the third largest settlement implantation for Indians in Uganda. It used to have 11.2% of the Indian diaspora (1959), but now has just a small fraction of it (4.4%).

Image 3.6 Photograph of an old private house in Mbale



Source: Author's photograph, January 2005

The UBOS review of the immigrants' places of birth shows a change in conformity with the registration of new migrants or returnees. The percentage of those born in Uganda decreased and consequently that of people of Asian descent increased. However, the omission of people of Indian origin who said they were Ugandan nationals (and not of Asian origin) in the 2001 documents could only make this change more dramatic and make us more prudent in interpreting the data. Moreover, it should be borne in mind that every immigrants' place of birth does not suggest the last place of residence before settlement in Uganda.⁷⁴

(74) This latter information was not provided to us by the UBOS.

With the 2001 UBOS documents indicating 2,340 Uganda-born “Indians”, it is necessary to go back to the last inter-census period. Whereas 925 people were born in the country in 1991, this figure increased by 1,415 individuals within ten years, a change that does not take into account people who may have been left out of the census.

Table 3.21 Marital status of men and women of more than 10 years old among the Uganda Indian community in 1991 and 2001

	1991			2001		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Never married	38%	27%	34%	37%	27%	33%
Married	59%	67%	62%	61%	68%	64%
Widow	1%	3%	2%	1%	3%	1%
Divorced or separated	1%	3%	2%	1%	2%	1%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: UBOS, 1991 and 2001 censuses

The strengthening of socio-economic positions at the top of the hierarchy

The distribution of professional activities among members of the diaspora did not change much between 1991 and 2001. There were more and more Indians holding positions of responsibility, with 43% of them being either self-employed, managerial staff or holding management positions. The “Indians”, who accounted for 0.04% of the country’s population (4 “Indians” out of 10,000 Ugandans), held 3.5% of the management positions (830 out of 23,458 posts).

In the last decade, there was an important change in women’s work: 16% of women were engaged in professional activity as opposed to 9% ten years earlier. This progression is especially remarkable considering that a third of these women hold positions of high responsibility while only 10% of them are unskilled workers.

Table 3.22 Socio-professional structure of the Indian population of Uganda during the 1991 and 2001 censuses

	1991			2001		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Managers/Senior Officials/Administrators	18%	2%	16%	22%	12%	21%

	1991			2001		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Professionals	19%	14%	18%	23%	21%	22%
Associate Professionals	17%	14%	17%	12%	11%	12%
Clerks	2%	1%	2%	2%	6%	3%
Service Workers, Shop and Market Sales Workers	24%	41%	26%	24%	31%	25%
Agricultural and Fishery Workers	0%	9%	1%	2%	7%	3%
Craft and Related Workers	14%	2%	13%	7%	1%	6%
Plant and Machine Operators and Assemblers	3%	1%	3%	4%	1%	3%
Elementary Occupations	3%	16%	4%	5%	10%	6%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source : UBOS, 1991 and 2001 censuses

A slight increase was noted in the proportion of assets in agriculture, but the percentage of engagement in the sector remained insignificant in a country where this sector remains massively dominant, employing 83% of the women and 71% of active men in 2001 (total population figures increased slightly in comparison with 1991).

In conformity with the nature of the activities they engage in, the level of education among “Indians” rose once again during the last inter-census period. From 39% in 1991 (33% men and 48% women), the percentage of “Indians” who had not gone beyond primary school fell to 26% in 2001 (22% men and 33% women). These figures can generally be compared with the 89% of Ugandans who had not gone beyond the same level of schooling. On the other extreme of the academic spectrum, the percentage of “Indians” who had gone to university rose from 24% in 1991 (29% men and 15% women) to 36% in 2001 (40% men and 31% women). This progression was more in women’s favour. Moreover, with only 2.7% of the African population having reached university, the contrast is generally sharp.

More than in Tanzania and Kenya, the position of “Indians” in Uganda which otherwise portrays them as a leading minority – they are not in any way involved politically and they do not participate in the country’s government – but at least they participate at the socio-economic level, seeing as they are highly-educated, active and prosperous. Not only are the levels of activity in this community higher than the average of the country’s population and exceeds that of all other (African) communities, but a number of members of the diaspora also create activities of their own. Whereas their population is still seven times lower than during the period before 1972, “Indians” in Uganda are, it appears, on a rising trend that could propel them to the economic positions that they used to hold a half-century earlier.

Conclusion

Census protocols are currently the most accurate and reliable large-scale means that enables us to know population size and composition. Towards the middle of the last century, the Indian population reached a figure above 350,000 in the three East African countries following accurate enumeration initiated by the British administration. After a sharp fall during the years after the independence upheavals, the Indian diaspora partly reconstituted itself (about 150,000 people in 2001) – with the help of fresh immigrants from India, to some extent – but they never, in proportion with the African population, regained their numbers during the colonial era. The case of Uganda – where the numbers of “Indians” were little over a long period of time – is both exemplary and special, due to their near total expulsion in 1972. The “Indian” population in this country, which has been growing rapidly since late 1980s, recovered especially with the help of fresh immigrants – and not, as claimed frequently, due to the return of former immigrants. However, and with a likely figure of about 10,000 (in 2001), its relative size further reduced both in relation to the entire African population and other foreign minorities, like Sudanese (164,000), Rwandans (106,000), Congolese (73,000) and Kenyans (35,000)⁷⁵. In the case of Tanzania, the population’s reconstitution at independence was probably a lot higher, although the total absence of statistical data since the end of the colonial era prevents any succinct conclusions in this respect. To obtain acceptable statistical findings, it would be needed to use methods of indirect estimation in the main cities of Tanzania, an undertaking that is beyond the means of this study. Finally, in Kenya, whose situation

(75) Bearing in mind that an insignificant part of these African minorities consists of refugees from neighbouring regions affected by civil wars.

is by far the best known, the “Indian” community plays – perhaps more than before – a central economic role, despite a major decline in population (by about 50%) since independence. Kenya, which is, like in the past, home to two thirds of the diaspora in the three countries, seems to have also become a passage route, for temporary immigrants, who are attracted, in the short or medium term, to more faraway destinations.

The fate of people from the Indian sub-continent in East Africa is dependent upon multiple risks: individual and collective will to assimilate, political will of governments to take advantage of their presence while managing to keep xenophobic impulses at bay.

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Annex 1

Quality of data on Indian population from the last two Kenyan censuses

Information on people of Indian origin living in Kenya has been extracted directly from soft census files. For the 1989 “Asians” file, like that of 1999, we had requested the CBS to extract from the reference file of individuals who responded to question regarding one of the four details of the “*tribe*” (*Tribe or Nationality*) variable, referenced as P14 in 1989 and P13 in 1999.

Table 3.23 Codes and terminology selected from the *Tribe* variable

P14 variable modality during the 1989 census		P13 variable modality during the 1989 census	
Code	Terminology	Code	Terminology
39	<i>Kenyan Asian</i>	45	<i>Kenyan Asian</i>
46	<i>Indians</i>	52	<i>Indians</i>
47	<i>Pakistanis</i>	53	<i>Pakistanis</i>
48	<i>Other Asians</i>	54	<i>Other Asians</i>

Source: CBS, Code list for 1989 and 1999 population and housing pilot census

Although the census was declarative in nature, it can be considered that there is a major difference between the four details presented in the table above. Those who said they were “Kenyan Asians” should first be considered Kenyan citizens from the Asian continent (and in fact essentially from the Indian sub-continent), while other details of “*Tribe*” variable first defined foreign nationals who had not acquired Kenyan nationality. The census forms have codes 46, 47, 48 for 1989, and codes 52, 53, 54 for 1999 called “*Foreigners–Asians*”, while a distinction is made between “*Kenyan Asians*” (Code 39), “*Kenyan Europeans*” (Code 40), “*Kenyan Arabs*” (Code 41) and “*Other Kenyans*” (Code 42), the same distinctions between Kenyan citizens from Kenya’s forty or so African ethnic groups.

Since the census is merely declarative, it is possible that “Asians” of Kenyan nationality declared in 46, 47 or 48, to show their attachment, for example, to the continent and attachment to their culture of origin, and vice versa that “Indians”, “Pakistanis” and “Other Asians”, depending on how long ago they settled in Kenya, said they were “Kenyan Asians”,

although they were not holders of Kenyan nationality. We assume however that such cases are few.

a) Number of Entries in the 1989 Census Form(s)

The data on “Asians” extracted from the 1989 census were provided in two separate soft files. The first file contains the entire “Asian” population living in Kenya, with the exception of inhabitants of Nyanza Province. Indeed, for technical reasons, it was impossible for the CBS to have access to digitized individual entries from this province. In order to correct this gap, a replacement (second) file was generated by the CBS in a bid to recover data from the province on “Indians” drawn from the 5% sample of the census. Thus, the first file has 82,905 entries compared to a mere 165 for the second. It can be agreed to multiply by 20 the latter figure in order to get an estimate of “Indian population” resident in Nyanza Province, about 3,300 inhabitants. The files therefore enable us to estimate at 86,205 in 1989 the total population size that we want to study, but we can reveal that this estimate differs from the one mentioned in the 1989 census released by the Central Office Statistics (published in March 1994) which should be considered as official.

The last enumeration according to “ethnic groups” (*tribes*)⁷⁶ released by the Kenyan government in 1989 showed that there were 89,185 people belonging to the Asian community and who were distributed as follows:

Table 3.24 Official distribution of the Asian population during the Kenyan 1989 census

Code	Ethnic group (tribe)	
39	<i>Kenyan Asian</i>	52 968
46	<i>Indians</i>	29 091
47	<i>Pakistanis</i> (Pakistanais)	1 862
48	<i>Other Asians</i> (AutresAsiatiques)	5 264
TOTAL		89 185

Source: CBS, Office of the Vice President Ministry of Planning and National Development, Kenya Population Census, Volume I, 1989, March 1994, Table 6 : Population by tribe, sex and district.

(76) “Last” in the sense that the 1999 data based on ethnic groups (tribes) has not been released and we will be presenting it in this article for the first time with the kind assistance of the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Planning and National Development.

The gap of nearly 2,980 people between the two sources is not negligible (+3.46% for official data compared to the estimated data from the two soft files) and can be explained by approximation of Nyanza inhabitants. One possibility is that this gap demonstrates misunderstanding of the definition of the “Asian” category. It may also be a compilation error. Moreover we know that some totals in the official publication⁷⁷ are erroneous, for example those on page 6-46 of Kenya Population Census Volume I (1989).

Table 3.25 Distribution in the table at 5% of “Asians” by “national group” and conversion for a total national scale workforce in Kenya

Value Label	Value	Frequency	Percent	Total Population
ASIAN-KENYAN	39	2675	0,25%	53500
INDIANS	46	1464	0,14%	29280
PAKISTANIS	47	91	0,01%	1820
ASIANS	48	285	0,03%	5700
Total Asian People		4515		90300
Total Kenyan People		1074131		21482620

Source : Statistical Confidentiality and the Construction of Anonymized Public Use Census Samples - a draft proposal for the Kenyan Microdata for 1989. Agnes A. Odinga and Robert McCaa, Minnesota Population Center, July 1, 2001, http://www.hist.umn.edu/~rmccaa/anon_kenya89_ver1.doc.

Although more inaccurate, another possible appreciation of the number of “Indians” living in Kenya in 1999 is available through the 5% sample, which can be accessed through the Minnesota Population Center (*Integrated Public Use Microdata Series* – IPUMS – available on <http://www.ipums.umn.edu/>). The numbers obtained this way ($4515 \times 20 = 90\,300$) are comparable (slightly higher) to those mentioned in the Kenyan statistics.

In conclusion, and despite the shortcomings in the two files mentioned below ($82\,905 + 3300$), no better reliable and accurate sources exist to account for the 1989 population of Indians in Kenya. As the files sent by the CBS provide indications of the individual characteristics of every enumerated person, they made it possible to bring out the structural composition of the under-population as a whole, which is comparable to what was revealed by the subsequent census in 1999.

(77) For an appreciation of the quality of the 1989 Kenyan census, see: Golaz, 1997.

b) Number of Entries in the 1999 Census Form

Considering that no publication brought out the ethnic origins of the people enumerated in 1999, the 89,310 people identified under the “Asians” category in the unpublished file from the same census are the new statistical reference for this population. To account for it, we spread the “Asian” group between the four referenced “ethnic groups”.

Table 3.26 Distribution per national group of the Asian population living in Kenya in 1999

Code	Tribe (Ethnic group)	number
45	<i>Kenyan Asian</i>	44 461
52	<i>Indians</i>	35 980
53	<i>Pakistanis</i>	2 897
54	<i>Other Asians</i>	5 972
TOTAL		89 310

Source : CBS, 1999 census

For 1999, all the data on people of Indian origin appear in the same file, contrary to the 1989 presentation. However, this arrangement is not prejudiced by total absence of errors as we are soon going to demonstrate.

c) Coding Errors in the 1999 Census Forms

A study of the places of birth variable in 1999 brought out coding errors on the details of some variables. This is the case with mentioning the place of birth as it appears during comparative reading of the (joint) tables that follow:

Table 3.27 Distribution by Country of birth of Asian (as enumerated in Kenya in 1989 and 1999)

Country of birth	1989 Census (without the Nyanza province)			1999 Census		
	Eff 89	(%) 89	% of the Asian pop. tot 89	Eff 99	(%) 99	% of the Asian pop. tot 99
001 – Uganda	635	3,0%	0,7%	1400	4,6%	1,6%

Country of birth	1989 Census (without the Nyanza province)			1999 Census		
	Eff 89	(%) 89	% of the Asian pop. tot 89	Eff 99	(%) 99	% of the Asian pop. tot 99
002 – Tanzania	1775	8,5%	2,1%	1847	6,1%	2,1%
003 – Ethiopia	83	0,4%	0,1%	109	0,4%	0,1%
004 – Somalia	52	0,2%	0,1%	1022	3,4%	1,1%
005 – Sudan	91	0,4%	0,1%	22444	74,4%	25,1%
006 – Other-Africa	422	2,0%	0,5%	3357	11,1%	3,8%
094 – Europeans countries	766	3,7%	0,9%	-		
095 – Asian-countries	16609	79,5%	19,3%	-		
096 – American countries	226	1,1%	0,3%	-		
097 – Rest of the World	233	1,1%	0,3%	-		
TOTAL Asians born abroad	20892	100,0%	24,2%	30179	100,0%	33,8%
TOTAL of Asians living in Kenya	(82 905)		100%	89310		100%

Source : CBS – from the files of the 1989 and 1999 censuses

The comparison between 1989 and 1999 needs to give priority to relative values because the Asians of 1989 enumerated here (82905) do not include the 3,300 inhabitants of Nyanza province.

In 1999, it seems that no Indian was born in India (not even in any Asian country) while those who indicated they had been born in Sudan were 74.4% of the “Asians” born abroad (and 25.1% of the total number of “Asians” resident in Kenya). The unlikelihood of these numbers is again acknowledged in the results of the 1989 census which shows that 79.5% of those born abroad were born in an Asian country while a minute percentage was born in Sudan. The most plausible explanation of this error is an unintentional confusion of Code “095” and Code “005”. Thus, all “Asians” born in India were in 1999 classified in the slot of those born in Sudan.

Table 3.28c Difference 1999–1989

"Tribes"	Kenyan Asian			Indians			Pakistanis			Other Asian		
Sex	M	F	M+F	M	F	M+F	M	F	M+F	M	F	M+F
0-19	-2,3	-3,4	-2,8	-3,9	-3,9	-3,9	-1,3	0,5	-0,4	-0,7	0,0	-0,3
20-29	0,3	0,2	0,2	2,1	1,8	2,0	3,1	-0,9	1,2	-0,2	2,4	1,0
30-39	-1,4	-1,4	-1,4	0,7	-0,6	0,0	-1,1	-2,4	-1,7	0,3	-1,6	-0,6
40-59	0,7	2,4	1,5	0,0	1,7	0,9	-2,3	0,7	-0,9	0,2	-0,2	0,1
60 +	2,7	2,2	2,4	1,1	1,0	1,0	1,6	2,1	1,8	0,4	-0,6	-0,1

Sources : CBS, Kenyan 1989 and 1999 censuses

Annex 3

Distribution of the Asian population in Kenya in 1999

Figure 3.16a

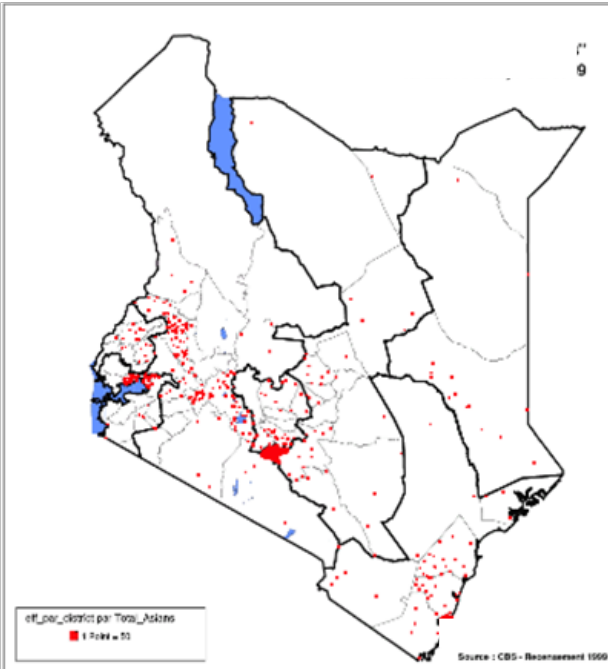
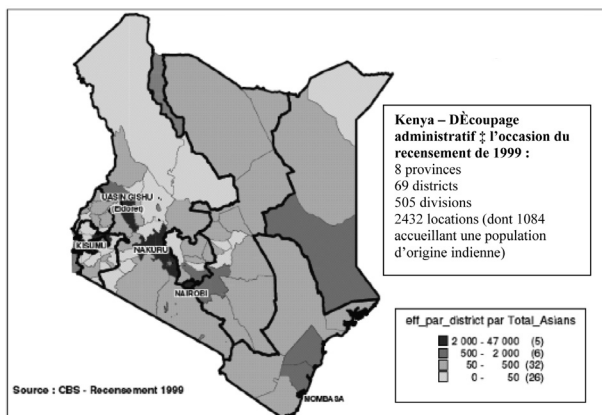


Figure 3.16b

Employees by district population living in Kenya in 1999 “Asians”



Annex 4

Official publications on population from the three countries studied

Tanzania

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Uganda

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- The Republic of Uganda, 1996, *Statistical Abstract*, Statistics Department, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Entebbe, Uganda, July 1996
- Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), *Migration and Tourism, Report IV (2000-2004)*, August 2005
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Family, Family Life and Marriage among Indian Communities in East Africa

Michel ADAM

Regardless of their religion or class, Indian families in East Africa, which mostly originated from north-western India (Gujarat, Punjab, Rajasthan) and south-eastern parts of present-day Pakistan (Sindh), are characterized by some structurally common traits. These traits can be said to be deriving from some sort of meta-culture, as explained in the introduction of this volume. The socio-cultural changes that have taken place over the last half a century laid the foundations for the original pedestal; they introduced increasing diversity between the communities, with some of them proving more permeable to outside influence than others.

The initial family model in north-western India

Formed from monogamous unions (including, with few exceptions, Muslims of any conviction), families from the north-west of the Indian sub-continent are organized in patri-lineages (*kutumb* or *khandan*)¹ and non-territorial patri-clans (*sibs*) called *gotra* whose apical ancestors are supposed to go back to the Vedic era (Kapadia, 1966)². The term *khandan* or *khandam* is also synonymous with family of high status. In

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- (1) As indicated in the foreword, the Indian terms mentioned in this chapter are either Gujarati, dominant vernacular spoken by members of the diaspora, or Hindi, or more rarely Punjabi.
 - (2) *Gotra* is a Sanskrit word meaning “cow pen”, which refers to the pastoralist origins of those who inherited this tradition. Each *gotra* used to have its own livestock brand.

Kenya the term “khandamic family” is used to refer to an honourable lineage, which resulted both from a class of good repute and having esteemed personalities in the family tree.

A patri-lineage is likely to incorporate several family segments whose indivisible nature remains attached to regions in Northern India. In East Africa, like in the former metropolis, the indivisible extended family (*kutumba*) remains the model for family organization. Its main features are generational cohabitation, having one common kitchen, one family religion. In the traditional joint family, brothers (*bhay*) do not leave their parents’ home and cohabit with their wives and children. In the past early traditional marriage accorded this custom some justification even though its explanation should be sought elsewhere³.

The cohabitation between brothers cannot be dissociated from the solidarity that is imperative between them, the moral imperative that is always present, particularly in case of death of a spouse or business and financial difficulty. In the past the duty to share went to the extent of including a degree of tolerance in case of adultery with one of the sisters-in-law, a now abandoned arrangement that should be more associated with past practices, such levirate marriage (*niyoga*) or inheritance of the eldest brother’s widow by the last-born brother (in contradiction with the more recent prohibition to remarry widows)⁴.

Bringing together three generations, the household can also host other distant relatives in arrangements that may be temporary or lasting, in isolated cases: studying nephews or nieces, relatives who have been widowed, etc. Although it is difficult to statistically confirm, this residential conglomeration itself seems to be practiced widely even today in spite of the tendency by young couples to end up in independent homes⁵. The prospect of living separately in any way from the aged

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- (3) The father is called *bapuji*; the mother is called *bha*; the wife singles out her husband’s eldest brother (*jet*) from his younger brother(s) *der*. The eldest brother’s wife is called *jetani*. The younger brother’s wife is called *derani*.
 - (4) Some authors also associate it with polyandry, which is actually unknown in Northern India and characteristic of Southern India.
 - (5) According to Kapadia (1966: 290), 69% of Kathiawar (Gujarat) families still had forms of joint family in the early sixties. Therefore nuclear family only applied to 31% of families. Thanks to statistical data from Kenya’s 1999 census, Laurent Nowik demonstrates above that at an average of 4.2 people per household, up to a quarter of the households consists of groups of non-nuclear residents. The remainder, therefore, are more than three quarters of the families living in what can be called “nuclear” structures. However, this information is insufficient to qualify the reality of contemporary residential model, since a number of apartments occupied by young couples and described as separate homes are actually part of the same family building.

parents (hospice, apartment) elicits unanimous disapproval and is never expected of the various descendants⁶.

The communal house, which is as indivisible property as the family itself, consists of common facilities: garden, patio, laundry, sanitary facilities, kitchen, family shrine (among the Hindu), lounge and dining room, and private apartments, often reduced to single rooms, and intended for the unmarried adult children as well as married couples. The patio is an all-purpose area, both a passage way, playing area for children, space for house work (ironing, sewing, etc.). Apart from personal objects (clothes, jewellery, trinkets, etc.) and of bare minimum furniture, household goods amount to few items. Most of the furnishings and household equipment are kept in the common area.

The living rooms (dining room, lounge) are generally decorated with multi-coloured tapestries (*rangoli*) and colourful pious pictures, which are often mixed with old family photographs. It is usual to find portraits of the dead hung on the wall, a habit that is perhaps a result of British influence⁷. The kitchen, which is sometimes separated from the rest of the dwellings by a protective curtain (*purdah*), is relegated to areas situated away from the visitor's prying eyes. The meals are taken together in the dining room, while the kitchen is generally managed by the mother-in-law, often with the help of her daughters-in-law. Traditionally, men eat separately and before everyone, a habit that is showing signs today of disappearing in favour of big family meals bringing together (especially in the evening) all members of the household⁸. In these nearly permanent cohabitation areas, some joy is brought by the presence of children.

The family shrine, main dwelling room among the Hindu, is always near the entrance to the common facilities. Dedicated to a protecting deity, (*kuladevata*), it also serves as some sort of mini temple (*puja ghar*) devoted to the belief in deities that are unique to every caste (in East Africa, it is often Rama or Shiva). Left under the care of elderly people, it is looked after with close attention. Offerings are regularly placed at the

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- (6) The issue arising currently, nevertheless, due to the shrinking of some families: to deal with it, the Oshwal Jain community has plans to create a retirement home to host old people at risk of isolation.
 - (7) A sign of the reincarnation cycle, the *swastika* with four hands, has disappeared from most interiors, with exception sometimes of Jain homes which have a custom of preparing a *swastika* from grains of rice. The white of rice symbolizes purity and lack of reincarnation, because once the rice is polished it becomes sterile.
 - (8) In some modest families, women still serve the children and men, then go to eat alone in the kitchen, sitting on the floor and holding their plates on their laps.

shrine. In modest and devout families, it is generally shown to visitors and serves as a statement of prestige.

Even though the patriarch (*karta* or *bapuji*) has authority over the family segment (particularly the group of sons, married or not), the household is in actual sense governed by the mother-in-law (*saasu*) whose reign over the family, in a way uncontested, particularly over her daughters-in-law (*bahu*). When she is widowed, she becomes even more powerful by acquiring part of the authority devolved to her defunct husband. Exempt from any material duties, her work is to transmit tradition, educate and advise her daughters-in-law on domestic and educational matters. She has authority over the servants, ensures purity of the food (*jutha*) is observed, sets the daily menu, prescribes the food to be bought, supervises housework (laundry is done jointly, this excludes the washing of underwear and ceremonial clothes), maintenance and decoration of the common facilities. The household budget, to which every nuclear family contributes, is managed by the mother-in-law, or alternatively by the eldest daughter-in-law.

Generally, the relationship between daughters-in-law and their parents-in-laws is distant and complicated: with their mother-in-law, the daughters-in-law are forced to adopt a submissive and respectful attitude, while actively participating in the domestic chores of the household. With their father-in-law, the daughters-in-law have to lay themselves open to rebuke over vanity. Once they are married and settled in the parents in-laws' house, they can welcome their own parents for brief visits but may not offer them food and much less give them shelter⁹.

Life in the joint family is a source of discomfort and tensions. In the first place, the tiny private space leads to frustrations: it is impossible to invite some friends (except with the mother-in-law's permission, in her presence and under her control); it is impossible to cook what one wants nor eat alone or as a couple; the children have nothing to themselves and their disputes quickly degenerate in quarrels between their mothers. Intimacy between couples is strictly confined to their private rooms, which are generally tiny. On the other hand, the joint family has advantages: household work is divided and everyone has more time for himself or herself, singles and old people are cushioned from solitude; couples cast their burdens on the community to help in caring for

(9) In Hindu families, it is however usual for young married women to return for a few days to their own mother's home after giving birth of their first child.

their children; raised together, children establish lasting relationships between them and develop sharing and helping one another.

Family life outside the joint family

Although social activity for the families varies according to their community, social environment and standard of living, it has common characteristics that make it possible come up with a general picture.

The first outing opportunities are community and religious festivals (*priti bhoj*) as well as family ceremonies. Most communities periodically organize in the annexes of religious premises festive meals to which all faithful are invited. For several years now, these meals have been prepared by African staff but under supervision of Indian officials, and there have not been criticism from any quarters¹⁰. The community premises also serve as venues for family ceremonies (birthdays, marriages, etc.).

Other festivities go beyond the community setting in the strict sense of the word without generally going outside the Indian African world. This is the same for quite a number of theatre festivals or movies, music recitals or demonstrations of traditional dance where members of several communities mingle. Such occasions for mingling are also available in families, particularly among intellectuals, liberal professionals or certain manufacturers. Some Indian families host a lot of such occasions and lead an intense society life.

Thanks to cars, which are widely owned today – including in modest or middle class homes – the family outings are frequent and appreciated. Visits to the countryside or the coast, walks in public parks, eating out in restaurants, are models of life that is widespread in Europe. Outings in the countryside (including dinner and nights in hotels or lodges) or excursions in the animal reserves are especially a preserve of well-to-do families. Along the Indian Ocean (Dar es Salaam, Zanzibar and Mombasa), the sea shore is a daily beehive of social activity of people from all communities. In Mombasa, the beach south of the island (Mama Ngina Drive) has become the daily sunset meeting place of diaspora families. In the sprawling brouhaha of hundreds of parked cars, parents and children crammed on rare lawn spaces, spread out their folding armchairs and settle down with their picnic baskets on the path of the

(10) African workers are also employed in private kitchens; a break with tradition – among the Hindu at least – according to which meals are prepared exclusively by members of one's own caste. As an exception, some rich families (or famous restaurants) employ Brahmin staff to prepare meals because they are reputed to be free from any pollution due to the assumption that their person is always associated with permanent "purity".

cool breeze from the sea. African hawkers sell from group to group. The children run between cars while others play various games. Some Bohra families do not leave their big limousines, with women donning their *bui bui* confined on the backseats, while the men sit in front with windows open playing backgammon games¹¹.

Public family show-off - a new development but that is quite usual in contemporary India - has not put an end to practices of gender separation in social life, particularly in entertainment. Male entertainment revolves around British-style clubs, which as may be recalled, were such a resounding success in India that one sometimes wonders whether it is the English who copied the practice from the country. All clubs are not community-based and even if they are, they may not be exclusive to only one community. Even though all groups have their own clubs, some Indians (tycoons generally) make it a point of going to clubs run by neighbouring communities or mixed or non-religious clubs. The incentives for such involvement in multi-community clubs are numerous: quality services offered (particularly aristocratic sports like cricket, golf or horse-riding); opportunities for meetings outside the community; need for integration with non-Indians, etc. This is how Madatally Manji (known in Kenya for his popular brand of biscuits *The House of Manji*), who was registered at the Sir Ali Sports Club (an Ismaili club managed by his community of origin), at the same time belonged to the Rotary Club, Muthaiga Country Club (very select), Muthaiga Golf Club, Nairobi Club, Nairobi Gymkhana, Parklands Sports Club and Kenya Police Sports Club, the former with mostly African members. Other Anglo-Saxon clubs - but of lower status (the Lions Club, for example) - also have Indian-Kenyan members.

Outside the male-dominated (marital or paternal) setting, women from all religions, for their part, have some degree of independence and are free to leave home alone, drive their cars and participate in a variety of extra professional activities. Even though a number of these activities are within the context of associations (art, cookery, philanthropy, etc.), some of them are based at the family home¹². Young girls are fond of private Indian movies and collect the post cards of film stars.

(11) The *bui bui* or *ridha*, which emerged a few years ago and is characteristic of Bohra women's attire, is a hood that covers the head and shoulders, only leaving the front of the face uncovered. With the *kamiz* (long-sleeved tunic), it replaced the *sari* and the *purdah* (light head veil, pulled down over mouth in public) which was once worn by all Indian women.

(12) Nevertheless, in her research on women Sikhs in Nairobi, Hanita Gurwitz demonstrated that in 1988 41.8% of them were members of a club in which some of them practiced sport: squash, tennis, golf (1988: 124).

Raising young children

Children are kept in the maternal space until they stop breastfeeding (never beyond one year), before they are placed under communal care by women: grandmother, sisters-in-law, and elder unmarried sisters. Boys and girls (brothers, sisters and cousins) in the household are therefore communally brought up until they become teenagers. Whatever the privileged ties between mother and child, the former should always desist from spoiling the latter with caresses and kisses in the presence of her in-laws. The children indiscriminately call their parents as well as their uncles and aunts “daddy” (*bapuji*) and “mummy” (*bha*). They call their siblings and cousins “brother” (*bhay*) and sister (*bahen*). Up to the age of seven or eight years, boys remain more or less confined to the women’s society. They are then placed under the control of men who impose on them strict standards of discipline. However, the father’s distant authority generally implies that he does not play an active role in the daily up-bringing of his children. The eldest sons enjoy some respect from the other brothers. In the past, they could only talk to them while standing.

During the entire early childhood (and beyond for girls), the grandmother plays an important role without ever taking the mother’s eminent place. In families that have been less influenced by the West, magic is still practiced, often for propitiatory or therapeutic reasons (magic message or *mantra* sewn in a garment, steel bracelet hung on the cradle), and rarely for vengeance or punishment (the so-called “contagious” black magic: cotton soaked in menstrual blood, clippings of nails, etc.). Although the knowledge of magic is frequently associated with the mother-in-law, it is possible that some beliefs or magic practices have been borrowed from Africans, particularly through domestic workers (Dahya, 1963).

Preparations for marriage: Relationships between young people and cultural orientation

There are no similarities in relationships between young people in each of the religious and class communities and quite extensively reflects the cultural differences between the communities. If these differences were to be summarized in a diagram, a double distinction should be identified between two orientations: a conservative orientation that would include groups at the bottom of the social ladder as well as groups that are most attached to traditional religious values (Kutchi Sunni Muslims,

Ithnasheri Shia Muslims and orthodox Bohras; strict Hindus); a liberal orientation would, on the other hand, include rich families, which are more influenced by Western lifestyles, as well as non-orthodox religious minorities (Ismaili Muslims and reformed Bohras, break-away Hindus from various minority groups: Punjabis, Arya Samaj, liberal fraction of Jains and Lohanas, etc.).

Although the children of both genders never share classrooms, they mingle from a young age in school. During their entire school life, the opportunities to meet are especially presented by sporting activities, which sometimes take up close to half of the timetable, as is the practice in the Anglo-Saxon schooling model. The preferred sports are hockey, cricket, baseball, basketball and badminton. Just like classes, sports teams are never mixed but informal training occasionally brings together children of both genders. Frequently-organized inter-school sports meetings enable children to widen their social networks, particularly non-religious schools that above all register African pupils.

When they become teenagers (13-14 years), young boys and girls share games outside of the school premises. In the cities of Nairobi and Mombasa, several shopping malls (property of Indian owners) provide leisure complexes based on Anglo-American models (bowling, tennis, swimming pool, movies). Young people from well-to-do neighbourhoods drive to these malls on Saturdays and Sundays in private cars or taxis, sometimes accompanied by their parents. They often spend late afternoon with the family, eating ice cream and drinking sodas at the terrace of any bar. There is quite a clear social hierarchy that exists between these new meeting spaces. In the proximity of the posh areas, the high cost ones have a cosmopolitan, half-Indian, half-European clientele (Village Market, Sarit Centre, Yaya Centre, Prestige Plaza in Nairobi; Cinemax in Mombasa). In contrast, other malls located at the heart of Indian neighbourhoods attract the youth from more modest neighbourhoods of the diaspora (Diamond Plaza in Nairobi's Parklands area). Still in Nairobi but far from the city centre and away from the residential areas, the Carnivore Restaurant and the rather recent Panari Centre seduces older young people and modern couples with expensive attractions (skating rink, karting, sports centre, casino, night club, etc.). In contrast to these modern complexes, the clubs, or better still, community centres have activities and diverse games in which children variously take part in, but which teenagers take little interest in.

Birthday parties constitute other meeting opportunities whose Western origin ritual is widespread today. In the form of family "bitings",

birthdays are celebrated in families, generally on Saturday afternoons. Young people can initiate invitations under their parents' supervision. A buffet full of pastries and sodas is prepared. Social games are organized (riddles, musical chairs). Away from the parents' sight the first couple role play and the games of seduction are played out amid hints of dancing steps to the sound of fashionable music (Anglo-Saxon and neo-Indian). But the dance does not actually take place. Everyone goes their separate ways before nightfall.

Towards the end of secondary school (between fifteen and eighteen years), boys and girls claim more independence, seeking to find out from emancipated young adults ways of freeing themselves from the control of their guardians. The Bollywood model, which came out of India and became a reference point for the youth, is now extensively accessible on the Internet, but it is still, as it has been for a long time, disseminated almost everywhere through cinema halls, the mass media (including public television), of the individual subscriptions to film and music magazines (often read in the waiting rooms of physicians and dentists) and special shops (magazines, disks, cassettes, DVD). The business, which is often controlled by young "rockets" (who illegally sell second hand copies of imported disks or articles exempt from custom taxes), is concentrated in Nairobi's Diamond Plaza, one of the meeting places teenagers are fond of¹³. Among the idols of the youth, contemporary Bollywood stars (Shah Rukh Khan, Saif Ali Khan, Sanjay Dutt, Abhisheikh Bhaccham, Aishwariya Rai, Rani Mukheji, Preity Zinta) mingle with the new romantic song heroes (Atif Aslam from Pakistan, Punjabi Movie Songs), as well as Indian music orchestras (Sikh origin Bhangra Music and New Indian Punjabi Music). Several cinema halls in Nairobi regularly show the latest hit Bollywood movies, which are very popular in the diaspora neighbourhoods. The younger generations especially like recent Indian movie productions, which uncompromisingly deal with social themes that are generally treated with silence in Africa (marital infidelity, prostitution, lesbian orientation, AIDS, abortion, etc.).

The dance parties, both festive and social, are common among young people (who are growing in number in well-to-do liberal families). Young people celebrate trendy music hits: contemporary Indian music and from all continents (hip hop, pop, rock, contemporary Arab music and of late, South African music). Generally held at home (therefore

(13) On the "rockets" phenomenon, see the book's introductory chapter.

under the vigilant watch of parents), the parties are actually held on Saturday afternoons, often to mark birthdays, or some sort of extension of the “bitings” described above. A result of the communal nature of the home, the blend of several lines of descent of cousins and their respective friends from both sexes facilitates networking between young people while increasing the number of potential circles.

In a clearly more unbridled style trend, clubs and night-clubs today attract younger and younger people. Although entry is in principle reserved for adults, many minors find their way in by falsifying their age. Blue Times and Gypsies (Westlands) in Nairobi are more or less exclusively patronized by an Indian clientele. Pavement, Black Diamond (in Westlands), Casablanca (Hurlingham) are patronized by a mixed clientele of Africans, Indians and Europeans. Similar joints also exist in Mombasa (Pirates, Kembo).

When they go to nightclubs the youth have the opportunity to consume alcoholic drinks. Like in Europe, the consumption of alcohol from a young age is a growing trend in Kenya, particularly in Indian neighbourhoods. Many youngsters consume beer from the age 12 or 13 years, even during daytime at bitings and other parties, without the knowledge of their parents. With the exception of some stricter Muslim groups (orthodox Bohras, Ithnasheri), most communities are affected. At some evening parties or in nightclubs, the consumption of spirits is acceptable both by girls and boys (Sambuka, tequila, whisky). Mostly often bought outside the clubs (due to high costs), the drinks are sometimes consumed beforehand not out of taste, but for the desire to get drunk¹⁴.

Early sex (15-16 years) has become common among the carefree youth and is quickly spreading to other neighbourhoods. Factors like Western influence, young girls’ desire for emancipation, easy access to condoms are behind this radical break from traditional behaviour. In many respects and in spite of the restrictions still maintained by families (particularly in traditional settings), relationships between girls and boys are easier to engage in and much more widespread than it was in the past. Apart from festive opportunities, numerous clandestine meetings take place in cybercafés, or even through online messages. As in Europe, mobile telephones often confer on girls the possibility to initiate romantic escapades.

(14) Among the youth there is competition over who can consume the highest number of “pegs” (shots in bar language) of alcohol within the shortest time.

Meetings between youngsters usually bring together all communities. In spite of their religious nature, most schools have Indian children from several religious communities, particularly from minority groups that do not have their own schools. Religious cohabitation, which is generalized in all school life situations, is never faulted outside school, even when it comes to home invitations (birthdays). As it has always been the case for adults, meta-community sentiments (mostly among adults of Gujarati descent or simply Indian descent) transcend distinctive religious identity. It appears that these same sentiments attenuate – without totally eradicating – the ever-present class differences as we will demonstrate later on the subject of matrimonial relationships.

There are apparently no restrictions against registration of African children. In reality, it only serves to reflect – without mitigating its chronic and constant shortcoming – the inter-community relations countrywide. The Indian-Kenyan religious schools register a very low percentage of African children (between 2 and 10% according to school records). It is this same percentage of African children that most Indian families invite for parties at home as guests of their children. It is however remarkable to note the relative novelty of such contacts, which are probably likely to increase in future.

Indian youth more remarkably embrace Western modernity ideals than Africans of comparable social standing. With the exception of those from the most modest fringes, young Indian-Kenyans share common aesthetic, musical, fashion tastes that widely set them apart from their parents. Even though the differences exist, as previously mentioned, between religious groups, these differences are heightened, as one would imagine between boys and girls. Although it has been observed that the youth are less inclined to frequent places of worship, it is more acknowledged among the Jains and Hindus (with the exception of minority groups Arya Samaj and Swaminarayan) and to a lesser degree among the Muslims. For instance, whereas non-Muslim boys have opted definitely for cosmopolitan Western dress, Muslim youngsters preserve the use of ceremonial clothes for going to the mosque, particularly for Friday prayers. This practice exists in all cases, except for the Ismailis, who have adopted Western dress in all situations. As for the girls, the difference between the communities is not clear-cut in this same chapter whatever the social context. Even though the majority of Muslim girls are subjected very early to wearing traditional attire (with the exception once again of Ismailis and, in some cases reformed Bohras), non-Muslim girls have adopted Western dress, at least until they get married.

However, there are occasions when they wear traditional clothing to attend certain festive events. The Bollywood influence has in addition brought back the taste for “Indian” clothes, a mixture of Western and traditional models (*sari* cloth, trousers and modern bodices, etc.).

In other respects, the attraction to the Bollywood phenomenon has elicited among the youth an unexpected renewed interest in classical Indian culture and easy access facilitated by the Internet. In spite of the general decline in vernacular languages (Gujarati, Punjabi), which is increasingly neglected by the under fifteen year-olds (in contrast with the fact they are generally spoken in all families), increasingly successful are classical Indian literature, dance and music, often in English language and sometimes in Hindi, which is taught in community centres and at the Indian Embassy Cultural Centre. Even though vegetarian tenets are no longer so strictly observed among the Jains and the Hindu (with some youngsters refusing to obey their parents’ wishes, while others, in contrast subscribe to a stricter adherence to the norm), a certain degree of adherence to vegetarian diet has become a tenet of other religious bodies¹⁵. These initiatives are a sign of a new phenomenon of individualism, which means greater liberty in behaviour.

The rules of traditional marriage

The rules of matrimonial union that are widespread in Northern India, and that apply to most of the Indian families in East Africa, impose very strict restrictions and constraints on those intending to get married. Setting a wide range of matrimonial do-s and don’t-s, they rule out the choice of a spouse from families that could in any way be suspected to have genealogical ties with one’s family. Paradoxically – and without in any way adopting prescriptions that are unique to the so-called “elementary” systems (choice of spouse within a group of blood relations socially known as “non-relatives”) – they organize a fastidious set of endogamous requirements.

Correlated to the indivisible extended family, the exogamic restrictions, are first and foremost, in the eyes of an ingenuous observer, suggested by the list of relationships that bring together, as mentioned previously, siblings and cousins (parallel and cross-cousins). The rule

(15) These restrictions add to those that have already been traditionally in practice since non-Hindu Indian communities have maintained food restrictions inherited or derivative from Hinduism. Thus Muslims more readily eat chicken than sheep. Even though there is no ban on it, beef is not eaten by all non-Hindu communities. The daily diet of numerous Muslim families, especially Ismailis, is indeed vegetarian.

currently followed in East Africa (traced to that followed in Northern India) consequently imposes exogamy beyond the lineage borders while disallowing, as a precautionary measure, any marriage between first or second cousins¹⁶.

Secondly, apart from the issue of simple collective preferences, which are quite distinct from legal constraints and dictated like everywhere else by socio-cultural and linguistic proximity, three types of prescribed endogamies characterize Northern Indian societies. Even though the first two, which are religious and class-based in nature, are widespread in the world, statutory endogamy in India has a particular feature due to the narrow and rigorous nature of matrimonial choice. Indeed, it is known to everyone that in the tradition set by the laws of Manu - but which in fact applies to all religious communities - the choice of a spouse must be within the smaller statutory grouping, notably caste or sub-caste (*jati* or *gnati*), which is moreover generally set - or at least from the roots - within a confined geographical area.

The third type of endogamous orientation applies only to Indian Muslims and is not prescriptive in nature since it stops at recommending an Ego Union with the daughter of one's paternal uncle (parallel patrilineal cousin). This matrimonial model, which originated from pastoral societies in the Arabian Peninsula - known in short as "Arab marriage" - spread with unequalled success in all Muslim societies, and even in non-pastoral societies.

As is often the case in social situations that are under strict norms - including, as we will see later, religious provisions - prescribed endogamy in India has for a long time been severally amended. The first concession, that has for a long time been accepted (but has nevertheless remained quite rare), allowed Hindus to have unions between spouses

(16) In such a system known as "patri-Hawaiian" or "Guinean" in Peter Murdock's terminology, the siblings and all categories of cousins are addressed as "brother" and "sister" (see the previous remark). In reference, the nomenclature, however, distinguishes matri-lateral and patri-lateral cousins, thus showing the patrilineal inclination of the system. In Gujarat and some part of Northern India, villages often comprise families linked to a single exogamous paternal clan, itself making up a *gnati* (caste in Gujarati) fragment. For this reason, exogamous constraint is generally confused with the village exogamy. In East Africa, this strict prescription - to which only the Jains do not subscribe - has for a long time meant that the roots of the fathers of two future spouses in principle had to be known in the two distinct ancestral villages (Bharati 1972: 73); but the rule is nowadays hardly observed. For their part, Christian Indians in principle adopted the European exogamous system that is a combination of a nomenclature known as "Eskimo" (distinguishing siblings and cousins; confusion of parallel and cross-cousins), banned marriage between bilateral cousins, and lack of preferential spouse. However, they remain under Tamil traditions in which the female cross-cousin (or niece) is an ideal spouse.

whose religions are related but at the same level of class respectability. A very well-known example in East Africa is the union between Hindu business caste families (Lohana, Patel, etc.) and Jain families, which are in principle casteless but have been assimilated in the “Banyas” (business castes in general) by the Hindu¹⁷. Secondly, among the Hindu as well as Muslims, a major adjustment in caste endogamy also involved amending the isogamous type of canonical marriage (spouses from strictly the same class) in the form of asymmetric union (spouses from different classes). The widespread form of this type of marriage is known hypergamous *anuloma* (“within the thread”) marriage, Male Ego marriage to a wife from a slightly lower status. It may be noted that the admission of a spouse from a lower class to benefit men alone is justified by the patri-linear nature of kinship, thereby ensuring within the species that status, therefore the entire patri-lineage is passed on to descendants (inversely, a matri-linear kinship would prescribe a Male Ego marriage to a higher class spouse). Thus a Brahmin, who as a man, enjoying privilege of transmitting his caste, can in certain circumstances marry a lower class woman¹⁸. Similarly (while getting assimilated to a religion foreign to a somewhat lower class Ego), a Muslim is allowed to take a non-Muslim as wife (on condition that she will subsequently convert). The symmetrical transaction that would imply loss to the Muslim community of children born in the marriage is, on the other hand, totally disallowed¹⁹.

The Indian tradition allowed even more far-reaching and unexpected concessions in marriage, in the form of *pratiloma* marriage: Ego marriage to a higher class woman. This marriage, which is exceptional in nature, was practiced in some rich families without a male heir. While it guarantees sustainability of “house”, it can be said that taking on a lower class son-in-law makes this type of marriage look like “inheriting

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- (17) In this case, professional position (in a caste matrix) tends to unofficially take the place of the caste, in the strict sense of the word, even though it erases neither the unique genealogies nor the religious identities. Thus Ismailis and Bohras – who do not allow any intermarriage with Hindus – are part of the Banya category. By virtue of the same principle, marriages between Zamindar Sikhs and Punjabi Hindus are traditionally tolerated in East Africa. It should be noted that regardless of its generic meaning, “Banya” also refers to a specific business caste from Northern India, but that is paradoxically not represented in East Africa (Bharati 1972: 42).
- (18) More widespread in East Africa is marriage between a man named Kaira Leva Patel and a woman named Lohana, from a very slightly lower status. In contrast, about thirty years ago there was no intermarriage between the main Sikh class categories, namely Valmiks (a lower “caste” assimilated with the untouchables), Ramgharias (intermediate “caste”) and Jats (aristocrats), see Bharati (1972: 70).
- (19) The Moghol rulers occasionally took wives from the Hindu religion.

the son-in-law” (also known in French as “*mariage en gendre*”), which was in the past widespread in France, in the Pyrenees region (Augustins 1989: 194). One of its modern variants is illustrated by the practice of importing husbands from abroad (particularly from India), necessitated by the demographic context in the diaspora – but which involves reversing residence rules.

Whatever its form, however, asymmetric marriage is only acceptable between spouses of nearest status and never, in principle, between members of different *varnas*, especially among Hindus, if the marriage is between spouses from religions that are completely foreign to Hinduism. This is what made the practice difficult with the non-Indians: Europeans and Africans. As we will see it a little later, hypergamous marriages among Muslims with Africans was in fact confined to Muslim Swahili families, more specifically Sunnis, considering the tiny number of Shia within the Swahili population of East Africa. The social dimension was moreover never ruled in these marriages since a number of Arab-Swahili families in the entire coastal belonged to yesteryear business middleclass. In other regions of the country, there were in the past few examples of marriages with Somali or Borana women (though they are both Muslims) and – as just mentioned – a minute number of marriages with non-Muslim Africans.

What are the qualities of a good (future) spouse?

How are today’s marriages settled and what is left of traditional marriage arrangements? Under pressure from their parents, young Indians have not entirely broken with the prescribed early marriage, which was well established in the past. This practice, which according to the elderly people was an answer to the risks of sexual carelessness among young women, is still widespread in the religious settings where there is staunch social conservatism, notably among the Bohras. Some puritan families even use the temptations in the modern world as an argument to rush into considering as marriage juvenile love affairs between their children the moment they see the partners as acceptable.

Even though in all settings the so-called “arranged” marriage is still the norm, the question that lingers in the mind is what this expression should mean. First, what should be ruled out, which is in actual fact uncommon in a strictly traditional context, is the assumption of parents exclusively making the matrimonial choice then imposing their choice on the future spouses. From then on two scenarios can be discerned. In the first scenario it is the parents’ prerogative to propose

a number of approved suitors from which the children can finally choose. In the second scenario, the children begin by choosing based on self-censorship (therefore ruling out beforehand suitors considered unacceptable), knowing moreover that the discernment opened out in this research doesn't dispense a final compliance of the parents. Contrary to conclusions, which are undoubtedly hasty, even though the first model today appears to be declining, it is defended strongly even in liberal families for reasons that are very clearly linked to some prospects of business and financial alliances.

A reflection on the definition of "acceptable suitor" (satisfactory or acceptable suitor), would probably first forget about personal character traits and individual socio-economic profiles and limit itself to socio-cultural criteria. However, in the Indian-African context, it is impossible to be silent about the fact that in most families, fair complexion – generally associated (although often wrongly) with belonging to higher castes – otherwise remains an optional criteria, or at least one of the preferred factors, particularly among girls.

Therefore, for the sake of adopting a closer definition, what is a "socially acceptable suitor"? A preliminary observation would hold that if socio-cultural norms in place, which define not the "acceptable" suitor but the "right" or "suitable", have hardly changed (in terms of class and religious), the allowed gap in relation to this norm has widened greatly over several years. Besides, it may be noted that the degree of tolerance shown today by families still covers probably a large majority of unions consummated in strict conformity with these same norms²⁰. In other words, even though almost all families show a very high degree of tolerance (within the limits that will be described shortly), very few of them find the opportunity to practice it. In contrast – and this is where most of the change and the capacity to change in the future lie – marriages consummated "outside the norms" but within the existing interval of tolerance, are now socially accepted and are no longer viewed as scandals or with disapproval.

The first liberty taken by almost all the families in relation to the canonical matrimonial body of rules has to do with the requirement to strictly adhere to exogamy. No one nowadays undertakes, and has the means, to verify – at least with the degree of precision demanded by

(20) There is no global study on this issue. The last assessment carried out in 1987-88, which was very partial, was on a sample of Sikh women (Gurwitz 1988). According to this study, 87.1% of marriages in the sample were arranged and 99% adhered to prescribed community endogamy.

tradition – the village roots of ancestors in a faraway country, which has with time become a simple point of reference for unity in community belonging.

Secondly, it is worth mentioning, with regard to prescribed endogamy – which is on the bending of isogamy rule (marriage with a spouse from the same class and religion) – this is dependent on the capacity to go round the rule in a merely asymmetric manner. As presented earlier, tradition responds to this demand by allowing the hypergamous arrangement – marriage between a higher class man and a lower class woman – under certain circumstances. It is clearly under the hypergamy regime that the tolerance interval has today been extended. In clearer terms, the tolerance interval extends to all types of marriages but more acceptable in a hypergamy setting.

The third way of understanding the tolerance interval – which is predictable and expected – is all about the caste one belongs to or the alternative to that among non-Hindus. We noted in a previous chapter the current difficulty in measuring caste prejudices which can only be matched by the resistance of individuals to publicly talk about one's caste. The first point that seems to have nevertheless been made so far in this respect is that in a vast symbolic field of respectability, accurate match-making between *jatis* (including the tolerated hypergamy extensions) as required in the past by tradition is no longer appropriate, even though we should reiterate that it remains more often adhered to in union practices. People no longer take issue with marriages between a Darji (“tailor”) and a Sutar (“carpenter”), or even between a Lohana (“trader”) and a Pattni Soni (“goldsmith”). Match-making between *jatis* belonging to far apart symbolic levels – like the union between a Brahmin or a *kshatriya* and a woman belonging to another *varna* – have been undeniably more difficult until today. The pressure from the opinions of non-Indians, socio-economic upward mobility by some members of the lower *jatis* and, last of all, the change in customs, have however greatly weakened arguments of those who favour a very strictly category-base endogamy. Among Hindus today there are marriages between the “twice-born” and partners from *choti jat* (castes of craftsmen at the bottom of the class hierarchy)²¹.

(21) Referred to in East Africa as *fundi*, a Swahili term, the *choti jat* comprise a set of varied castes (or sub-castes) which as is the custom in India are positioned in the lowered *varna* of *sudra*. However, no *jati* in East Africa accepts to be recognized in this category. All members of *choti jat* therefore claim to be from one of the three *varna* of the “twice-born”

The fourth and ultimate threshold of tolerance in matrimonial union is one's faith since religious disparity is unanimously considered likely to disrupt the symbolic universe of relationship between families brought together by marriage. According to this principle, partners belonging to other big religions, generally Hindu, Muslim or Christian, are ruled out of marriage considerations just like in the past. Within these categories, the scale of tolerance in exogamy varies according to each religion's own criteria, which are sometimes strengthened by mere cultural and linguistic criteria: even though Hindus, who are always ready to reinstate break-away faithful, quite good naturedly accept (as previously seen) marriage unions with Jains - or even with Sikhs, they especially do it even more readily when the partners originate from the same region (for example a Hindu spouse with a Sikh partner both from Punjabi origin²²). It should also be recalled that in addition to this complex religious assembly there is, as we also noted, a purely class dimension but which is not explicit (thus a Patel Hindu spouse readily marries an Oshwal Jain partner whose social class has always been assimilated to his/her own caste). In contrast the requirement strictly religion-based match-making for Muslims will generally continue to apply, consequently ruling out unions between the two main Islamic groups (Sunni and Shia) and even between various break-away groups (Ismailis, Bohra, Ithnasheri, etc.).

What remains to be explored is the hypothesis on marriage with non-Indian suitors, particularly Africans. When interviewed (young people, family members), they say these types of marriages are quite impossible, not due to any prejudice, but due to the aforementioned community endogamic principles. Those concerned even advance arguments to justify their reluctance that do not lack in aptness (what language, what religion, what culture would the children subscribe to? how would one resolve the frequently conflicting dilemma of choice?). There is no doubt, however, there are marriages conventionally referred to as "mixed", and that they have been increasing in number over the years²³.

(*vaishya*, *kshatrya*, and even Brahmin), with their current professional identity being a mere result, according to them, of recent historical vicissitude.

(22) See Bharati's remarks on this subject (1972: 60).

(23) To the author's knowledge there is only one study conducted nearly forty years ago on the issue. It shows that 79% of those interviewed then considered "mixed marriages" unacceptable (Rotchild 1973: 194). However, since the informants were not asked about the exact nature of the "mixed marriages" (man, woman, ethnic identity of the spouse, etc.) and since the responses were distinguished according to communities (reluctance could greatly vary from one community to another), such a poll only elicited very limited interest.

First, marriages with Europeans (or Westerners in general) often take place as a result of pursuit of further studies abroad by young Indians. Although there are no statistics that would help to assess how frequent it happens or its nature (but it is known that such marriages involve mainly Hindu youth), resistance by families has not prevented the increase in such marriages, particularly in Great Britain. In all the cases known to the author and from what the informants said, it is significant that the majority of these marriages more often involve girls than boys, in contradiction with the thinking behind the patri-linear requirements unique to Indians²⁴. The explanation of this asymmetry can probably be found among Europeans (who are more reticent than Indians themselves to let their daughters marry strangers). As for tolerance observed on the part of Indians, it can undoubtedly be explained by today's fascination with Europe, even though such unions are judged harshly by community institutions. It is a fact – even in assumptions on domestic resistance – that these types of mixed marriages are not on any account confidential in nature. They are conducted in ceremonial, with the families often demanding double celebrations: European and Indian.

Unions with Africans have different characteristics, since they are first and foremost asymmetric with African women, inversely comparable to what has just been described about marriages between Indians and Europeans. Secondly, unlike the latter, unions between Indians and Africans are not publicized. In reality – apart from marriages between Muslims which will be examined shortly – they are never real marriages, from an Indian perspective, but informal unions even though they are sometimes a reason for some sort of celebration among Africans. Thirdly, they are statistically negligible – a few hundreds, one or two thousand at most in the whole of East Africa. Moreover, their sociological characteristics set them aside or on the fringes of usual matrimonial conduct. They involve a small minority: intellectuals or human rights activists preoccupied with becoming pioneers or behavioural models, entrepreneurs or isolated singles in the rural areas, etc. (the case of Sikh entrepreneurs is often cited). Children born in mixed marriages are called *jotawa* in Gujarati, a term which roughly translates as “half-caste”, but it actually has a derogatory connotation and that would more accurately be translated by the French word “*batard*”. Whether these

(24) Morganatic marriages between Europeans and Ismaili imams have, nonetheless, been practised since several decades.

children are recognized by their father or adopted by the mother's family, their life ends up with difficulties. Thus it is assumed that any future marriage with a spouse of "non-half-caste" Indian remains inconceivable, just as plans of a union between Indians and Africans²⁵. Examples known by the author also show even though mixed couples and their children have some difficulties getting themselves accepted in the Indian neighbourhoods (including their areas of residence), Africans are not more tolerant towards them. Knowing that ethnic cohabitation is both widespread and accepted among Africans, such behaviour raises several questions: 1) are Indian cultural ingredients incomprehensible for Africans? 2) is the fact that half-castes are economically and socially connected to their Indian reference group sufficient reason to exclude them of the African community²⁶?

Already tackled in a previous paragraph, the case of Muslims must be treated differently. The paragraph indicated that common religion could facilitate mixed marriages in the unique case of Sunnis. There is an unknown number Indian-Swahili couples in Mombasa, and in other cities along the Kenyan coast (Malindi, Lamu), as well as Dar es Salaam and Zanzibar. There are also several Indian families which acknowledge having had Arabian or African descent in their family tree²⁷. Generally, these unions – which are often unnoticed by Europeans – are accepted both by Indians and Africans.

Search for (the right) spouses

Apart from assuming spontaneous local meetings in the cultural and festive settings described above, the search for spouses is an important activity on behalf of suitors and their families. From the beginning of the colonial period, families often dedicated several months to this undertaking using their different networks of relatives. Up to the years before independence, the local sex ratio imbalance that did not favour

(25) The author can cite the case of a trader in a remote rural area in Kenya whose father was Sikh and married to a Gikuyu. His father had to mobilize resources for several years of preliminary negotiations for his son's marriage as he had to identify for him a bride who in some way matched his "class", meaning a woman who was herself half Sikh and half African. The chosen one was finally found in far southern Tanzania. The couple, which was completely "Indianised" and considered themselves Sikh (in terms of religious, clothing, cuisine, etc.) now lives in a traditional compound with the husband's Gikuyu mother as the mother-in-law (now a widow) of the household.

(26) A few years ago, Kenyan *jotawa* formed some sort of informal association to protect them from discrimination they often face.

(27) In 1972, Bharati estimated their number at about 5,000 (1972: 160). Indian-Africans who acknowledge African lineage are called Africawallah.

girls supported match-making business in Gujarat and Punjab (often run by broke Brahmins) at the service of the diaspora in East Africa. In other cases (particularly that of small communities whose local numbers were not sufficient to meet marriage demands) single men went to India in person and came back to Africa after the marriage.

Such cases are no longer the norm. Even though the trips to India did not reduce, a number of families lost their links in the country while the cultural gap with the emigrated communities widened over the century. A large number of Indian girls, for their part, only wanted to travel to Western countries²⁸. The number of “incoming brides” therefore decreased considerably even though they did not quite disappear, particularly as demonstrated by demographic statistics²⁹. In contrast, the search for future spouses (girls and boys) among Indian immigrants in Western countries (particularly within the communities in England and Canada) is widespread among rich and middle class families. Such potential spouses, whose ideal image is a degree from a prestigious university and speaking English with a British accent, are much-sought after in Kenya where they are known as “dukes” (derisive title borrowed from the title Duke of Buckingham)³⁰.

Faced with lack of matrimonial resources from the former metropolis, potential spouses have adopted other strategies that are better suited to modern life, which have grown in leaps and bounds. Thus several communities use the means of their international networks to actually set up matrimonial forums. This is what Bohra Shia, who are known to encourage early marriages, have done³¹. Held in luxury hotels of big cosmopolitan cities (Dubai, Singapore, Cairo) and in leisure centres (including famous beaches) these forums have had a resounding success despite the high cost of holding them.

Internet networks, which are less expensive and often a preamble to numerous meetings (including the previously described forums), are currently the main means of matrimonial engagements. Indian-Africans

(28) Indian-Kenyans have a poor reputation in India. They are accused of abusing alcohol and not respecting vegetarian precepts. Kenya itself has negative media coverage because of chronic insecurity in its urban areas.

(29) For this, see the chapter on the diaspora population by Laurent Nowik.

(30) We previously saw that the practice of getting male spouses or husbands abroad in the past was, on the contrary, more associated with some sort of “feminine hypergamy”, where the future husband accepted exceptionally matrilocality, necessitated by expatriation, rather than class or material advantages that went with it.

(31) The Bohras have an organ called Taisirum Nikkah Comity (TNC) specifically in charge of such arrangements. The TNC also organizes tourist trips, which are of course run by chaperons.

in East Africa (as well as Indians from all over the world) know *shaadi.com* website (“marriages.com”) whose advertisements, in disregard to all laws, respond to certain detailed questions by applicants – especially skin colour and caste whose discussion is, in principle, prohibited by Indian law.

Paradoxically, the modernization of “arranged” marriages has given rise – or advent in some very traditionally conservative families – to romantic love known as *muhabbat* or *isq* (terms that are both Arab and Persian in origin). This neo-traditional lyric model, which once inspired a high level of literary development, is a common plot in Bollywood scripts. In a confrontational break with the canonical forms of model couples following *sva dharma* (behavioural model that is unique to every caste), *muhabbat* is distinguished by union, regardless of any family consent, between a man and a woman who are sexually attracted to one another. Thus it leads to two types of marriages, which were greatly disapproved by religious tradition but which were widespread in the past among aristocrats: *gandharva* marriage (passion marriage accompanied by drama of abduction) and *raksasa* marriage (kidnap marriage)³². However, the prudishness remains a requirement in the expression of these feelings, before and after consummation of marriage. Nevertheless, no one in East Africa and India seems to know the famous erotic scenes found in classic sculpture in some of the Hindu temples.

Settling marriages: Matrimonial compensation, engagements, wedding ceremonies

The matrimonial arrangements are, like in the past, accompanied by negotiations between families. Associated to hypergamy, the dowry custom (*hunda*) exists in the whole of Northern India among the Hindu, including isogamous marriage when it is not required by tradition. Outlawed in 1961 by the Indian Parliament, it is nevertheless extensively kept in practice, and even well developed, particularly among members of the lower middle class, who imitate the higher classes³³. Though it has not been abandoned altogether, the practice has, in contrast,

(32) Another type of “romantic” marriage, which is tolerated by the Muslim tradition but condemned by Hindus, was recently used in Bollywood movies: it is passion marriage practiced in the mid-16th century between a Muslim Moghol sovereign and a Hindu princess from Rajasthan (Jodhaa Akbar).

(33) While indirectly helping to promote prevention of births among girls, dowry continues to weigh on imbalanced sex ratio in India. See Anita Desai’s novel *The Fast and the Feast* for more information on misuse of dowry.

considerably decreased in the Indian setting in East Africa³⁴. Young couples may, however, reintroduce it in a bid to quickly acquire separate housing using, in this case, the wife's resources against the husband's family's wishes. Among Muslims, dowry is not practiced. In contrast, the wife inherits part of the paternal heritage (in principle half of what the boys receive). Today it is not rare for such capital to be invested in real estate property, which the household is likely to use whenever necessary.

Matrimonial compensation (*sulka*), which is disallowed by classical Hinduism, is not currently practiced among Hindus in East Africa. It is widespread among Muslims but it has never reached the levels that it has in some Arab countries. According to Hindu customs, the husband (or his family) is required to offer a wedding gift. On their wedding day, wives receive *mangal sutra* from their husbands as paraphernalia - necklace made of black pearls mixed with golden perlines. *Mangal sutra*, which serves as a real symbol of marital ownership, must be conspicuously worn at all times³⁵. On the same day, all able bride grooms also offer their wives golden jewellery decorated with precious stones³⁶. Once married, women who respect tradition have their nose pierced on the left for the insertion of a jewel known as *sari* (fewer women do this). Widows remove it just as they break the bracelets received as gifts on the wedding day upon the spouse's death.

The engagement ritual is always part of a tradition that is still followed in all communities. Known as *roca* among Hindus ("stop", "interruption"), it actually marks the end of pre-marital search and therefore implies real commitment to the chosen partner. Engagements last brief periods (three to six months) and their sole aim is to set a timeline for wedding preparations. The ceremony is usually simple and always ends with the ritual consumption of milk, the symbol of child-bearing in the future.

Whatever the community, a wedding ceremony is one of the biggest moments in the festive life of Indian-Africans. Although there is a wedding season for all religions (which falls in November and December of the western calendar), the exact wedding date among Hindus is always set after consulting a Brahmin astrologist fortune teller. The consultation, aimed at discerning favourable predictions, is sometimes discreetly sought by some Muslim families, particularly Ismailis.

(34) Non-existent among the Jains and rare in Brahmin families and in highly populated areas, the dowry custom remains important in the traders' castes and among the Sikhs.

(35) Jains also follow this custom.

(36) Gold is meant to cast away priapic demons. Men generally do not wear gold.

Three types of wedding rituals are practiced side-by-side in the Hindu Diaspora in East Africa: traditional, semi-traditional and modern. The so-called “traditional” ceremony, which lasts a period of four to five hours, brings together several hundred guests in rich families. It takes place in the community centre auditorium (which comprises a temple and other facilities for not strictly religious purposes). On a stage and facing those in attendance, the wedding couple exchange necklaces and flower garlands in front of the Vedic fire after a Brahmin has proclaimed the seven commandments for spouses and obtained their consent. The young wedded couple is then presented to all guests. The ceremony ends with a reception.

In the so-called “modern” version of the ceremony, the wedding lasts one or two hours. It keeps several elements of the traditional ceremony but in a simplified form: garlands and rings are exchanged and the husband still applies the *sindhor* (colourful dot) on the wife’s forehead. He also offers her the *mangal sutra* (the ritual necklace mentioned above). But there is no ceremony around the fire.

Traditional Hindu wedding in Nairobi

The wedding takes place in the auditorium of a big religious compound in Nairobi comprising two temples (one for Hindus who hail from Gujarat and the other for those who come from Kerala).

The expansive auditorium (500 to 700 seats) is furnished with comfortable seats decorated with cushions and decorated with garlands. At the far end of the room, facing the audience, some sort of altar is set covered by a canopy mounted on a golden diadem and supported by columns. Before the altar, which brings to mind a miniature temple, are several armchairs facing each other. On the right of the altar, a decorated small stage is erected for an orchestra of three musicians, impressively dressed in Indian traditional costumes: a *tabla* player, a zither player, and a drummer.

All the guests are welcomed by the bride’s father dressed in a traditional ceremonial costume. All women are dressed in *saris*, while a large section of the men are also dressed traditional costumes. The guests take their seats in the auditorium. The groom arrives, accompanied by his father. His future father-in-law welcomes him in a complicated ritual. The groom proceeds alone into the auditorium. In front of the bandstand, he is welcomed by the Brahmin, who is master of the ceremony. He then goes on to sit down on one of the seats placed before the altar. The bride’s entourage (sandwiched by two elder brothers) solemnly goes

down the auditorium's central aisle with a battery of photographers in its wake. The orchestra begins playing classical Indian music. The groom welcomes the bride under the canopy and invites her to sit on one of the other seats. The Brahmin stands at the foot of the altar and severally makes offerings of flowers and fruits. The very complicated wedding ritual begins and lasts an hour and a half. Several aspects of it are akin to the Christian ritual with some close symbolic differences. The future spouses sit face-to-face in the beginning then side by side once they have been joined together. They exchange not rings but necklaces (including the *mangal sutra* offered by the groom). The groom applies the *sandhor* on the bride's forehead. The now joined together spouses are then locked in a chain made of intermingled flowers. Flowers and rice are thrown on their faces. The Brahmin then recites the seven marriage commandments in Sanskrit (very close to Christian commitments). He recites a speech in Sanskrit that no one understood. The last symbolic gesture borrowed from the Vedic ritual: the brazier fire is lit in front of the couple. The man and woman go round it several times.

The ceremony ends punctuated by the orchestra music. A gigantic vegetarian buffet is served under tents pitched on the compound's expansive lawns. The hundreds of guests are invited in turns to congratulate the newly wedded couple.

In total contrast with the Hindu marriage (as well as its modern version), the Ismaili wedding ceremony has changed a lot over the years. Interspersed in the past with Hindu rituals (to a point that a Brahmin's intervention was sometimes sought), it must have faced repeated criticism from some Muslim hierophants, particularly Sunnis. After dissociating itself from Hindu influence, it did not, however, adopt practices that are unique to traditional Muslim weddings. In its most recent aspects, the Ismaili wedding is in many respects as an avant-garde prototype of the modern Indian wedding, and insofar as it is detached from religious ritual it resembles Western civilian weddings.

A Modern Ismaili wedding in Nairobi

The ceremony takes place at the Ismaili community centre auditorium in the capital. The audience of about 150 people consists of members of the liberal bourgeoisie. Many women wear elegant *saris* while a few of them dress in European attire. For their part, men have more or less all taken to the European mode of dress. The auditorium is furnished with comfortable seats but devoid of decoration that may point to any religious or cultural orientation.

There is a long oblong table on a stage. Seated behind the table in front of the audience are the imam's representative, the *cadi* (Muslim magistrate) and his assistant, as well as the parents of the future husband and wife. Armed with a microphone, a master of ceremony is close to the table.

At the foot of the table, in the first row reserved for the audience, four seats are reserved for the future husband and wife as well as their witnesses.

The master of ceremony describes in English the various steps of the ritual.

The groom arrives first at the auditorium, accompanied by his mother and followed by his close family. The bride then enters holding on to her father's arm.

The couple goes to sit down first, escorted by their witnesses (a man and a woman). The imam recites a psalm prayer. The *cadi* takes over. He reads the marriage contract as well as the legal marriage provisions that bind the future husband and wife, particularly those that bind them to a community arbitration institution in case of conjugal conflict.

The couple comes to sit at the table, accompanied by their witnesses. They sign the marriage contract. The *cadi* declares the couple husband and wife. The couple exchanges union vows. Everybody applauds.

The newly wedded couple takes some minutes off. When they return, they cut the wedding cake. They each eat a small portion. In the meantime, the audience sings "*Congratulations...etc.*" (an English song). Everybody parades to congratulate the newly wedded couple. Some have brought gifts.

A reception, served in another room, ends the ceremony.

Future of married couples

The above remarks give a glimpse of the importance of transformations affecting the behaviour of the young people, and indirectly and finally therefore that of young couples, on which in turn family reform depends.

Even though few of them could pride themselves in attaining the level of moral liberty to which young singles (both girls and boys) currently aspire, a large number of young Indian couples today do not see themselves in a big picture of a household where the wife conforms strictly to Manu's precepts (IX-12), which talks about the six dishonourable acts of married woman: "drinking alcohol; sleeping at abnormal times; wandering; entertaining bad company; going into another man's house; separating from her husband".

The majority of spouses aged between 25 and 35 years first and foremost plan to acquire an independent home and thus put an end to the collective residence system which most of them are still subject to³⁷. Female professional involvement is the second great aspiration of the new generations. In the three countries of East Africa – more particularly in Kenya – the spread of contraception and the modernization of domestic techniques reduced the influence of motherhood and outlined the premises of this change. A large number of Indian women today are engaged in professional activity and have no intention of abandoning it – even if it depends on that of their husbands, like it is often the case in business families. This trend can only have more natural impetus to the advantage of further qualification of female work³⁸. Whereas female numbers at secondary education level in Indian religious schools has today nearly reached 80% of the male numbers, increasing proportions of girl pupils are getting to the university and specific professional training colleges³⁹.

It is true that in other areas changes do not come quickly because of strict social control. The first limitation to family transformations is the persistence of the coercive nature of marriage, both in premise (pressure from parents) and possible resolution (in case of conflict between the spouses). In Hindu tradition (*dharma-smriti*), marriage is absolutely indissoluble and the remarriage of widows is forbidden. Even though the latter rule has only applied to the higher castes, remarriage widowed

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- (37) In an already cited but old study, a group of married women were asked: "Do you appreciate living with your married brothers?" 47.5% answered "No" and 34.4% "Yes" (18% had "No reply"). The majority of those in favour of the system then were 45 years old, had no secondary education and had no professional occupation (Gurwitz 1988: 217-218).
- (38) There are unfortunately no statistics on involvement of Indian women in professional activities. In her 1988 study, Hanita Gurwitz observed that 41% of a sample of Nairobi Sikh women had professional activities (16.4% were teachers and 9.4% were employees, while the rest were nurses, shopkeepers, builders, decorators, etc.). See Gurwitz (1988: 146). Except in the case of teachers, it is impossible to establish from this study the proportion of female jobs linked to a male member of the family (father or husband owner of a business, for example). Generally, mothers-in-law, fearing the weakening of their domestic power, are still often opposed to their daughters-in-law working. Nevertheless, in Hindu and Jain families, it is not abusive to state that almost all women aged 35 years and above are now engaged either part-time of full-time in a professional activity.
- (39) Among girls, the rise in the level of education at all academic levels has been rapid within all Indian communities over the last few years, particularly in Kenya and Uganda. For more on this subject, see the chapter by Laurent Nowik (*supra*).

women remains quite rare⁴⁰. Even though the possibility of divorce is no longer ruled out today, it is strictly restricted by community institutions, which strengthens the efficiency of parental authority. Most community authorities have arbitration institutions to carry out obligatory attempts at conciliation between the spouses. Due to this, the number of divorce cases remains very low, whatever the community.

Secondly, as it is the case in raising children, which we have already talked about and commented on, the metamorphosis of the status of women – and, in the same vein, that of all the households – also depends on the diversity in socio-cultural, economic and religious factors. In general, submission by women remains a reality in lower class neighbourhoods, where they have lower levels of education and are subjected to rigid religious constraints. In these areas, there are a thousand and one signs of gender inequality that is deep-rooted in some ancestral traditions: use of teknonymes to refer to the husband, vegetarianism of convenience imposed on women, both relics of the system known as *pardah*, which forces daughters-in-law to respect all the men in the household, strict domestic training of girls among Bohras and Ithnasheris, persistence of clitoridectomy within a section of the Bohras, etc.

Other behavioural traits are, however, not associated with the status of women, but unique aspects of the Indian culture – that are perhaps partly dependent on the collective residence model – but anchored in collective behaviour and reproduced through education. Thus, except in cases of intimacy, relations between spouses always remain under the rule of reserve, sexual morality and dignity. Up to now it is not appropriate for spouses to smile at each other in public or display the slightest sign of affection, observing thus an order that applies to the relations between men and women everywhere. Spouses (wives in particular) avoid calling each other by their first names, and often use teknonymes (“so and so’s father” or “so and so’s daughter”).

The Indian diaspora family setting has no doubt kept for a long time these distinctive characteristics inherited from traditions that are alien to East Africa. The question now is how, without questioning the identity of their own cultural institutions, individual descendants will accept to import them upon migration for use on another continent, the continent of their birth, in other words, their country.

(40) Moreover it was in the past often confused with the levirate marriage custom, where the younger brother “inherits” the widow of his eldest brother. It should be recalled that suicide by widows (*sati*) was outlawed in India by the British administration in 1829.

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Nizarite Ismailis in Kenya

Colette LE COUR GRANDMAISON

Nizarite Ismailis in Kenya form a community that is open to the modern world, quick to seize opportunities, adjust and innovate¹. About 8,000 in number, it is only less than 0.3% of the Kenyan Muslim population (about 3,000,000 people)². Mainly urban, it is seen as the elite and actually holds a leading position in business, industry, finance and intellectual professions. This chapter aims to outline how the Ismaili society is organized. However, a historical detour while dwelling more on the 19th and 20th centuries is necessary. It is during this historic period that a new chapter in the Ismaili history was written under the auspices of the two Aga Khan; it was during this period that the Ismaili community as it is known today came into being, complete with an accomplished, rich organization with multiple projects and which is looking towards modernity. Like other Shias, Ismailis believe in the dynastic legitimacy of the Prophet's family, namely Ali's lineage, his cousin and his son-in-

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- (1) Most data for this chapter was collected from Ismaili institutions: namely the headquarters of the Aga Khan's government in Gouvieux (France) and the Institute of Ismaili Studies (London) where we consulted documents accessible to non-Ismailis (May 2004). Documentary information was complemented by a field study and interviews carried out in Nairobi and Mombasa (Kenya) between July and September 2004. The various study visits were made possible by budget allocations made by the French Institute for Research in Africa based in Nairobi (IFRA).
 - (2) Estimates of the number of Muslims in Kenya have been most contrasting and far-fetched, ranging from two and a half million, according to Western sources, to 12 million according to the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims. Knowing that Muslims in Kenya are more concentrated in Coast and Nairobi provinces than in northeastern Kenya, which is very sparsely populated, the last census regional data clearly favour an integrated figure of between 2.5 and 3.5 million.

law, his daughter Fatima's husband. Known in Arabic as *shi'at* Ali ("from Ali" or, by ellipsis, *shia*), the Shias today are 216.1 million or 15% of the world Muslim population³. Among them, the Nizarite Ismailis are a breakaway minority scattered in four continents and whose numerical importance is difficult to assess ranging between five and twenty million people⁴. Mostly settled in Asia, particularly in Central Asia, Bangladesh, numerous in Pakistan and India, Ismailis are scattered in the Middle East, Africa and North America.

The three schisms

In the succession of Shia Imams after the Prophet the first schism between two factions took place in 765 (148 AH) after Imam al-Sadiq's death. Imam Jafar al-Sadiq was the sixth imam after Ali: those who recognized his son Ismail as successor are the Ismailis or Septimamians. These are those who recognized Musa al-Kacim as the seventh imam who remained in power until the twelfth imam and died towards 873. The 12th imam, Mahdi, remains the only imam for a large majority of Shias today. The disciples of the twelve imams are called *ithna ashari* or duodecimans. In 1094 (487 AH), a second schism broke out after Imam Fatimid al-Mustansir's death. His two sons fought for power: Nizar his appointed successor and Ahmed al-Mustali Billah. Two rival factions confronted one another: the Nizarite Ismailis who now recognize the Aga Khan's authority and Mustalians, Ahmed al-Mustali's followers. In 1130 (524 AH), a third schism emerged: the Mustalian faction split into two new groups, the Hâfizites and the Tayyibites (Yemen), today Bohras' ancestors. "Ismailism develops an esoteric doctrine founded on the intimate meaning of the Koran, *al-batin ta'wil*, an interpretation of the inner, original meaning" (Daftary 1998: 345). "Besides their literal and obvious meaning, the precepts of the Koran and Tradition," according to orientalist Bernard Lewis, "had in the Ismailis' eyes a second, allegorical and esoteric significance, which was revealed by the imam and taught to insiders" (Lewis 1982: 64). The believer's spiritual evolution punctuated with progressive initiations, leads him/her to the evident meaning of *shari'a* – the sacred Islamic law – towards the knowledge of hidden truths.

(3) *Le Monde*, "Focus", Wednesday 25/10/2006.

(4) The Institute of Ismaili Studies in London and the Shia Ismaili Council for France give an official figure of 20 million Ismailis. In several of his interviews, the Aga Khân acknowledged that he does not know the exact number of his followers. For the entire African continent, the number of Ismailis does not perhaps exceed 40,000 people.

The imam occupies a central place in the Ismaili system – whether it is in doctrinal matters in organization or when authority is required. “The imams were inspired by God and infallible, and were to a certain extent divine themselves since they were the microcosm, the personification of the metaphysical soul of the universe. As such, they were, and are, the source of knowledge and authority, of esoteric truths hidden from laymen and commandments that require total and blind obedience.” (Lewis 1982: 63).

The Gnostic Ismaili thought considers time as a progression of cycles – *dawr* – and successive eras with a beginning and an end. The cyclic history contains concealment periods – *satr* – when imams are hidden from the eyes of their followers, and periods when the unveiled truth is revealed, resurrection – *qiyama*. This term has a double meaning: the end of the cycle and the end of time in the eschatological meaning of man’s end with the ultimate transformation of the world.

“The Islamic doctrine of dispensation (*taqiyya*: “prudence”, “precaution”) according to which a believer under constraint and threat is dispensed to fulfil religious obligations” corresponds to the practice of concealing beliefs that are likely to arouse hostility from the authorities or from the people (Lewis 1982: 61). It is what enabled Ismailis to escape persecution temporarily and also to carry out missionary activities under cover led by their “propagandist” preachers (*dai*)⁵.

Spaces conquered by Ismailism

Initially confined to Syria and Iraq, the area covered by the subsequent spread of Ismailism included Egypt, Tripolitania and the Maghreb. Later the Ismaili doctrine conquered parts of Persia and high plateaux Central Asia: Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Northern Afghanistan, before making new converts in the Indian sub- continent: Sindh, today’s Pakistan, Northern India (Gujarat) and Bangladesh.

According to Louis Massignon’s famous remark, “the 10th century (4th century AH), was Islam’s Ismaili century”. As André Miquel recalls, “the followers of the doctrine are split into two sects” (Miquel 1977: 105): on the one hand, the minority Qarmats, faithful to the hidden imam theory moved to Iraq before they founded a Community State in Bahrain. Or the other, the Fatimids, who founded an Ismaili State in North Africa between 909 and 1171, the period considered as the golden age of Ismailism.

(5) *Dai* is also the title given today to the Bohra Shia imam “designate”.

For the first time, an Alid, Ali's descendants, acceded to the head of an important state. The Fatimid caliphate allowed the Ismaili faithful to practice their faith in broad daylight. The State set up an efficient administrative organization with a ministry of Finance, a ministry of Defence, of Justice, etc., which secured itself substantial revenues thanks to customs duty and property taxes, thus making a solid economic basis.

It had its capital in Cairo, at the intersection of a wide road and trade network, with a fleet of ships, inland water shipping on the Nile and booming agriculture. During this period of intellectual, scientific, artistic bloom, some Ismailis became eminent scholars who contributed by their theological, philosophical and legal knowledge to enriching Islamic culture. Great importance was granted to education: conferences, sermons and public lecture sessions added to numerous writings in Arabic, the language of science and religion. In Cairo, which then had an estimated population of around 50,000 people, houses, palaces, gardens, caravan inns, mosques, including the famous Al-Azhar Mosque, were built. Once the persecutions were over, the State set up a policy of religious tolerance that did not impose Ismailism on Fatimid territories and welcomed other religious and ethnic communities such as the Armenians or the Jews. Religious mission work – *dawa* – attracted fresh adherents both in rural and urban areas. Beyond Egypt and Syria when at its apogee, the Fatimid Empire spread to parts of North Africa, Sicily, the Red Sea African coastline, Yemen and the Arab Hejaz, with the holy cities of Mecca and Medina.

Following the death of Caliph al-Mustansir in 1094 (487 AH), a second schism pitted Nizarites against Mustalians. The Fatimid State supported Al-Mustali while Hasan Sabbah, a Fatimid preacher in Persia, rallied behind Nizar and established a new State: the Nizarite Ismailin State. After withdrawing to Alamut Fortress, Hasan Sabbah fought the Seljuk Turks and faced the Crusaders in a war. Resorting to martyr-fighters (*fida'is*), he initiated a new method of fighting: the selective killing of enemies and political opponents⁶. The Nizarites' methods, which were

(6) Hasan Sabbah decided to set up his hideout in the Elbourz Mountain in northern Persia, and built the Alamut Fortress at the opening of a narrow gorge 1,800 meters above sea level. In control of the scattered territories from Syria up to eastern Persia, Hasan Sabbah established an independent Nizarite state, sending missionaries and striving to conquer and set up strongholds even in distant outposts. He decided to make Persian the language of religious missions because it was understood by the targeted populations. These measures did not spare Ismailis from facing fierce fighting using all sorts of means: expeditions were sent to besiege their fortresses and starve their supporters; their immediate neighbours were set against them in a war of attrition that subjected them to incessant attacks. Hasan Sabbah designed a revolutionary strategy against his opponents;

reported by the Crusaders and Marco Polo, among others, have fed the Western imagination. Marco Polo himself, in his *Book of Marvels* (13th century), describes Alamut Fortress as follows: “In this Mulecte country, a place where Heretics dwell, according to the Saracen language, lived a very wicked Prince called ‘the Old Man of the Mountain’”⁷. On the threshold of the valley and at the entrance of the garden, he had such a solid and impenetrable castle that he feared no one in the world” (Marco Polo 2004: 114-115). According to the Crusaders, the *fida’i* had to be drugged to carry out their punitive expeditions. The term *hachichi*⁸, a pejorative word – probably a popular insult in Syria – might have been used against them by Syrians, which was never confirmed by any document. This reference contributed to feeding the legend according to which *fida’is* were hashish consumers. After being persecuted by Persians, Nizarite Ismailis were later reduced to a minority sect scattered in small communities in territories in far eastern Persia, northern Afghanistan and a few regions of central Asia.

Ismailis in India

While the Nizarites who led a semi-clandestine life, went on practicing *taqiyya* (hiding) “under the disguise of both Sufism and duodeciman Shiism” (Daftary 1998: 249), Ismailis soon gained impetus after they had settled in India at the end of the 14th century. Pir Sadr al-Din from Persia has been considered as the founder of the Nizarite community in India⁹. Originally his followers were members of the Lohana, who were a rich class of traders, also known as *khoja*, an honorary title used as the time to refer to all Nizarites¹⁰.

The Nizarite State was successively led by three *dais* and five *hujja* (*hujja*: the imam’s first assistant). Rashid al-Din Sinan, a Syrian Nizarite, was appointed head of the Ismaili Syrian province where he set up a *fida’i* body. His rise coincided with the third Crusade (1189-1192).

he ordered a series of individual aggression. Thus Vizir Nizam al-Mulk, who had got an Ismaili leader executed, was killed and became the first *fida’i* victim. Between 1101 and 1103, the “list of honour” of killings included that of the Mufti of Ispahan, the Bayhaq prefect, and in 1139, that of Caliph Abbasside al-Mustarshid and his son Al-Rachid. The killing of Conrad de Montferrat, King Jerusalem in Tyr is sometimes also attributed to Hasan Sabbah.

- (7) Nickname given to Hasan Sabbah.
- (8) *Hachichi*, in Arabic: the first meaning is dry grass or fodder. The next meaning of the term more specifically refers to Indian hemp, *Cannabis sativa*, whose narcotic effect was already known by Muslims in the Middle-Ages.
- (9) Small groups of Ismailis were already settled in Sindh by the 9th century (Salvadori 1989: 224).
- (10) *Khoja*: derived from Arab *khawaja*, which means “lord”.

Charitable and temple military orders did not fail to extort money from Nizarites settled in this “heretical refuge”. Towards 1220, the Nizarite State eventually weakened. In 1256 (656 AH), after a long siege, the Alamut Fortress fell into the hands of the Mongols. It was the end of the Nizarite State that had lasted 166 years.

A special form of Nizarite Ismailism developed in India under the name “satpanh Ismailism”, the way to salvation, obviously inspired by Hindu spiritualism. The *pirs*, spiritual guides, practiced “an acculturation strategy which proved successful by including indigenous religious practices and concepts”, which attracted many adherents to them. The only accounts that relate Nizarite Ismaili activities in India are *ginans*, khoja religious poems, orally passed on by the *pirs* for centuries then transcribed, much later.

Towards 1830, while Ismaili imams were still based in Persia, the 46th Imam Hasan Ali Shah, received from the Persian Monarch Qajar the honorary title of Aga Khan (Great Lord) which could be passed on to his descendants. After political setbacks, he bought refuge in Afghanistan before settling in Bombay in 1844 thus becoming the first Ismaili imam of his lineage to live in India. Some supporters protested and challenged his authority by taking the matter “Aga Khan Case”, to the High Court of Bombay in 1866. The judgment, which was in the imam’s favour, granted him the status of spiritual leader of the “Ismaili Shia Imamis” in British India and heir by direct descent to the Alamut imams. It confirmed his right to collect cannon fees (dime: *dassond*). The imam, who was enthroned Aga Khan I, died in 1881/1298 and was buried in Bombay. His son who succeeded him only reigned four years. In 1885/1302 Sultan Muhammad Shah became the 48th Ismaili imam under the title of Aga Khan III.

Under the reign of Aga Khan III the first major migration waves to East Africa took place. These migrations, which had remained sporadic up to then, were mainly headed for the prosperous island of Zanzibar, the epicentre of a commercial circle which included Eastern Africa coastal territories and at one time spread up to the eastern Congo basin. Aga Khan III confirmed the interest he had shown in the emigrant communities by paying them an official visit as early as 1899 and by promulgating the first Ismaili constitution in Zanzibar in 1905¹¹. This Constitution actually was Ismailim’s first political charter in the world.

(11) By 1870, the Zanzibar Island already had more than 500 Ismailis (Sheriff 1987: 147; Nicholls 1971: 290).

From Zanzibar, the first Ismaili settlers moved to Mombasa, then to Nairobi, Kisumu and Kampala. The first Ismaili community settlements were built in Mombasa in 1888, in Nairobi in 1903, and in Kisumu in 1905 (Salvadori 1989: 226). In 1914, there were already fourteen Ismaili communities in Kenya, scattered among the country's main cities. The number of Ismailis, who had settled in Kenya, quickly rose from a few hundred at the beginning of the century to 20,000 by 1960 (*Ibid*: 226).

Messages from the Aga Khans

As the supreme and infallible guide the Aga Khan alone can issue a contemporary interpretation of the sacred writings to his disciples, thus preventing any heresy. His disciples owe him full allegiance. In a 1952 declaration, Aga Khan III said: "Even though Koran words remain the same, every generation, every century, every period of history must have a fresh interpretation different from that of the past" (Boivin 1993: 791).

Even though the last two Aga Khans religious messages confirm that the Ismailis still belong to the Muslim *umma*, they foretell the need for modernization and set up its main lines. It is worth mentioning that when Aga Khan ascended to the throne in 1885, most Ismaili immigrants were still illiterate and destitute. Therefore, the Aga Khan's messages, *talikas*, had to be simple, and written in a familiar, intimate style. The *talikas*¹² gave lots of practical advice and encouraged community members to lead their lives and carry out their business the best they could. They were first required, to remain faithful to Koranic principles, but were encouraged to adapt to East Africa's changing aspects. By raising the level of education before anything else, they would open up their scope of activities.

In accordance with the Aga Khan's directives, the female population was the first to benefit from such an education policy. Opened in Mombasa in 1918 the girls' school preceded the school for boys which opened in the same city one year later. It took another twelve years actually in 1930, before other Ismaili schools opened in East Africa¹³.

In the years that followed World War II, Aga Khan III severely lambasted the fundamentalist conception of women's status, which

(12) Derived from the term *ta liga* in Arabic, *talika* refers to a comment, an opinion on a news event.

(13) The first Ismaili School in Nairobi was set up in Parklands area in 1948. Cynthia Salvadori observes that during the colonial period, Ismailis opened about 90 schools in various towns in Kenya, often for limited periods due to the varying number of pupils (Salvadori 1989: 231, footnote 2).

maintained then in slavery, imposing the veil and the *burqah* on them and confining them to an insignificant role in society (Boivin 1993: 768). He became the advocate of women's education to prepare them for their role as mothers and managers of home life while he allowed them to do paid work. Although the Ismailis were supposed to submit to the *talika* instructions, the Aga Khan's recommendations concerning female education came up against strong resistance¹⁴.

As he was eager to go on ahead in matters of political evolution, as early as 1952, the Aga Khan, informed the members of the Ismaili community of the existence of independence movements in East Africa. In a *talika* addressed "to his spiritual and beloved children" – such were the terms he used to refer to his disciples – he carefully urged them to protect themselves against the social repercussions of such dissent: "These movements are like rain that is about to fall. One cannot stop rain but can protect oneself from it by putting a raincoat. For you, Ismailis, the raincoat consists in owning your walls and your houses, which whatever happens will remain your walls and houses, but it also means acquiring a better education" (Boivin 1993: 798).

During this period before independence in African countries, Aga Khan III particularly emphasized the need for Ismailis to become owners of their means of production. To help them, he created the Investment Trust, the community financial institution which was supposed to grant attractive facilities to all the faithful. After setting up a real estate programme meant to build housing and business premises, a programme launched to celebrate Aga Khan III's Diamond Jubilee, a community insurance company, the Jubilee Insurance Company widened the imamate's government's capacity to intervening financially while offering the Ismailis special offer rates in matters of protection¹⁵. In 1952, Aga Khan III organized a conference in Evian that brought together the Supreme Council secretary, the presidents of provincial councils and Ismaili associations, along with the heads of various institutions. The early signs of independence appeared in the distance. It had become urgent to look for new direction and select priorities. After

(14) An anecdote illustrates this cultural gap between families and community leaders. During the 1950s, three pupils from Zanzibar (two boys and one girl) were promised scholarships in the academic award scheme for excellent results. The scholarships would enable the two best pupils to be rewarded with opportunities to pursue studies abroad. Even though the girl was the best among three, the two scholarships were finally awarded to the boys, since the girl's family refused to let her travel abroad.

(15) All Ismailis were subsequently enabled to access long-term loans with a view to encouraging investment (*Diamond Jubilee Trust*, 1946).

this conference, the Aga Khan made a series of decisions involving the members of the community: firstly women to adopt western dress in their daily life. Secondly, English was to replace Gujarati as the teaching language in Ismaili schools. Thirdly, a scholarship programme was being set up to help poor and deserving pupils. As a religious leader keen on sparing the Ismailis the orthodox Muslim's frequent criticism of giving in to syncretism, Aga Khan III demanded that his followers should give up the creeds and practices inherited from Hinduism.

After Aga Khan III's death in 1957, his grandson and successor, Prince Karim Aga Khan, carried on his grandfather's policy. Observing the demonstrated inclination the Ismailis interest in promoting businesses, Aga Khan IV encouraged them to innovate and invest, emphasizing the need for everyone to attain high-level professional training. "I no longer want you in the retail business", he wrote to those of his followers who were still confined to this activity. At his instigation were launched the major industrial and financial development projects that today secure the Ismaili community's position in the economy of East African countries. In 1963 the Industrial Promotion Services (I.P.S.)¹⁶ was created while banking and insurance activities were restructured internationally. In the same way in 1971 the Tourism Programme Service (T.P.S.), which runs one of East Africa's largest hotel chains (Serena) was created. In 1984, the three agencies in charge of the manufacturing, insurance and tourism sectors were merged into a federal institution: the Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development (AKFED), which works in partnership with development institutions, governmental agencies, the banks and industrial groups. The projects proposed were to be "economically viable" and "were to contribute to national development". Aga Khan IV's accession corresponded to a significant improvement in the average standard of living for the East African community. Access to property through cheap loans, housing improvement, the creation of dispensaries and schools even in the small towns, widely contributed to everyone's greater welfare, which meant so much to Aga Khan III. While they were scattered all over the world and could be seen nearly everywhere as minorities directly threatened by the rise of nationalisms, the Ismailis could open up more to their host countries and demonstrate their commitment to philanthropic and cultural activities.

(16) A financial institution aimed to promote the establishment of industrial businesses.

In the historical context before African independence, greater importance had to be attached to the Indian minorities' reputation since the Ismailis were particularly eager to blot out the image of predatory strangers and to appear loyal to their adopted countries. Given that a number of them had been in East Africa for several generations, were attached to their homeland and spoke East African languages including Swahili for most of them, they were able to claim the right to a higher status without disowning their cultural and religious uniqueness. When he became imam (1957), Aga Khan IV encouraged them to acquire citizenship of the countries they lived in.

Constitutions and present of organisation

Studying the constitutions since 1905 throws light on the stages of institutional change. Promulgated in 1905 in Zanzibar, the first Ismaili constitution redefines the Nizarite Ismaili identity compared to that of the Duodeciman Shias and the Sunnis while emphasizing the respect that must be granted to other Muslim communities¹⁷. It endowed the Ismaili community with a new administrative organization in the form of a hierarchical structure of councils whose powers and functions it defines (Daftary 1998: 294). The constitution instituted the principle of regular assessment whenever changes occurred in the political, social and economic contexts in every country of settlement.

The setting up of councils at all levels of the territorial constituencies (national, regional, local) was the first step of this new organization. These councils, whose limits of jurisdiction were defined, were placed under the authority of a supra-national board, the East African Council¹⁸. Whereas the leaders' functions and roles had initially been devolved to traditional religious community leaders (*mukhi* and *kamaria*)¹⁹, they were later transferred to members of the civil society. The subsequent constitutions, that of 1927, 1937, 1946, 1952 and 1986, corresponded

(17) During the years before the constitution was drafted, a fresh wave of migration to East Africa was set off by the construction of the Uganda Railway (1883-1901); an influx of Indian workers from many parts of the sub- continent (among them Sunni Muslims and Duodeciman Shias) resulted from the demand for manpower. Although most of these workers went back to India when their contracts expired, it is commonly admitted that those dates correspond to the beginning of sustained immigration which went up to the eve of independence.

(18) This council, which was then based in Zanzibar, was set up in Nairobi following the 1964 revolution.

(19) In the traditional community organisation, the *mukhi* was both the religious and political head of a local community (*jamâa*). He led ceremonies, officiated at family functions (weddings, funerals, etc.) and collected religious fees. The *kamaria* was his assistant.

to the evolution of Aga Khan III's wishes for a better organization and modernization at large.

Major historic events such as Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya's independence, the Zanzibar revolution and the expulsion of Indians from Uganda had consequences on the rhythm of this process that was to extend to the three East African countries²⁰. The various Indian minorities' respective conditions of life were deeply and unequally changed. Political and economic measures triggered emigration of variable scale in Kenya and Tanzania. In Kenya, the restriction on commercial activities imposed by the 1967 Trade Licensing Act led within months to the departure of about 20% of the Indian population (Prunier 1998: 203)²¹. In Tanzania, where the percentage of Indians who left rose to 25%, the state control of external trade and the numerous nationalizations directly struck the Indian communities. In Uganda, the August 5, 1972 expulsion order led to massive emigration of at least 70,000 Indians to other African countries as well as towards the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States²². This cumulative effect of political, economic and demographic upheavals slowed down the implementation of the planned administrative and institutional organization, which was postponed until the beginning of the 1980s.

The *jamatkhana* organization and the 1986 constitution

The term *jamatkhana* refers both to the community assembly itself and to the meeting place and worshipping place associated with every Ismaili community scattered throughout the world. *Jamatkhana* leaders are in charge of government functions and decentralized administration such as organizing community activities, conflict resolution, tax collection, etc. Keen to first and foremost maintain his authority over all his followers, Aga Khan III insisted on community religious practices being observed exclusively at meeting places under his control. In every *jamatkhana* the local religious or administrative leaders' was limited to two years. As they were scattered throughout the vast East African region, Ismailis also had to report whenever they moved and to justify they had paid their of religious fees. As for, the *jamatkhanas* themselves they were urged

(20) 1961: Tanganyika's independence; 1962: Uganda's independence; 1963: Kenya's and Zanzibar's independence; 1964: formation of the United Republic of Tanzania (Tanganyika and Zanzibar); 1967: Arusha Declaration.

(21) Promulgated in November 1967, the Trade Licensing Act drastically reduced the business licenses issued to non-Kenyans. However, a number of Indian traders who had obtained Kenyan citizenship were also denied business licences.

(22) See in this volume the chapter by Laurent Nowik.

to be vigilant and economical with their funds. Women's committees played an increasing role within the *jamatkhana*, by helping children and ensuring their well being, by checking the quality of hygiene and teaching home economics, by developing charity and humanitarian activities. The rule of a biannual change of local leadership also applied to them.

In compensation for the restrictive rules imposed on members of local communities, the right to contest a council decision entitled them to lodge an appeal. Several legal proceedings were set up: regional council, supreme council and the Aga Khan's judgement. Such innovation, however, did not question the community's general submission to the imam's directives²³.

In 1986, Aga Khan IV gave the Ismaili community a new constitution that marked a turning point in the community's governance. Successive amendments aimed at setting up new administrative systems in the three East African countries, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania in order to improve the various education and public health programmes that had previously been implemented in the region, thus putting in action one of Aga Khan III's precepts: "Ismailism has survived because it has always been flexible. Rigidity is contrary to our whole life and all our prospects".

Introducing private law²⁴ and specifying the disciplinary action to be taken against individuals²⁵, the 1986 constitution for the first time promulgated a mode of unique government for the Ismaili community in the world, some sort of "territory-less nation" on four continents (Adam 2004: 31)²⁶. This central government is under the absolute authority of Mawlana Hazar Imam or Aga Khan IV (Constitution, Art.1). Based in France, about forty kilometres north of Paris²⁷, the Ismaili government has several "ministerial" departments (general administration, religion, finance, justice, education, health, industrial

(23) Submission whose almost unanimous nature had caught the attention of Western observers by the end of the post-war period.

(24) Marriage and succession.

(25) Particularly cases of indiscipline against religion or a religious leader.

(26) Asia, Africa, Europe, North America. Ismaili communities are currently established in more than 25 countries: in North America, Canada, United States; in Europe, United Kingdom, France, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, Bosnia; in Africa, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Mali, Niger, Burkina-Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, Madagascar; in Asia, Turkey, Syria, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kirghizstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh (according to AKDN, 2002, Country Locations).

(27) In Aiglemon, rural township near Chantilly, Oise Department.

and commercial development, etc.), whose management is partially entrusted to members of the Aga Khan family²⁸.

The fact that Ismailis are scattered in various parts of the world and the extremely wide variety of their businesses however implies decentralized administrative systems as well as a minimum of flexibility in exercising power, if not by the absolute supreme authority, at least in the application of rules according to the local context. Thus all Ismaili communities are divided into “provinces” (*darkhana*) which in most cases correspond to the main host countries: India, Pakistan, Tanzania, etc. Initially eleven, the *darkhana* are now fourteen (2005). In every *darkhana*, a local “governorate”, a governing body represents the Aga Khan’s authority. Every “national” governing body reproduces the central government structure, but on a joint basis involving every local community. Such local involvement remains under central authority. Partially elected, the so-called “national” councils are led by leaders, who are themselves appointed by the Aga Khan. Only three countries do not have this kind of structure: Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan, where resident Ismaili communities are led by special committees (Daftary 2003: 302). The national boards run every *darkhana*’s general affairs, but within the respect of every sovereign country’s national laws. Their essential duty is to preserve community’s interests (*jamat*), ensure its unity and well-being: education, health, encourage the tradition of voluntarism, strengthen the community cultural heritage and maintain ties with the Muslim *umma* while cooperating with other peoples. The national board also acts as go-between the Aga Khan and the resident communities they represent. They inform the Aga Khan of their specific situation: activities, areas of interest, difficulties and they submit some proposals to his agreement.

The Leaders International Forum, which meets several times a year on dates set by the Aga Khan, brings together the leaders of national boards. This forum gives then the opportunity of strengthening their common and religious calling and gives the Aga Khan the opportunity of confirming and updating his policy’s guidelines.

Whilst the national boards are charged with resident communities’ civil administration, the national boards for religious affairs (*Tariqah* and Religious Boards) are charged with religious matters. Like national boards, they are broken down into regional boards and local boards.

(28) Thus Princess Zahra, the Aga Khan’s first-born daughter, is in charge of education programmes.

Their duty is not limited to the administration and management of religious buildings. They organize religious teaching and teachers' training as well as the publication of books and teaching aids. Another responsibility of religious boards is to ensure ritual uniformity within all national communities. Therefore they are bound to meet frequently.

At the same provincial or national level, Grants and Review Boards control the use of budgetary resources and funds allocated by the Aga Khan to each *jamat* or to other decentralized institutions. Grants and Review Boards ensure conformity to procedures: proper allocation of funds, conformity to accounting regulations and check expenses according to objectives and order possible audits.

Including five magistrates: a chairman and four assessors, National Conciliation and Arbitration Boards are courts dealing with commercial, domestic and family conflicts: marriage, divorce, custody of children, succession. Authorized to make enforceable rulings within the strict boundaries of Ismaili *jamat*, these community jurisdictions²⁹ also act as appellate courts for regional or local boards of arbitration, these boards ruling first in cases of lesser importance. On the other hand, all cases involving parties from various national boards are heard by a kind of Supreme Court under the Aga Khan's direct authority (International Conciliation and Arbitration Board). Such a Supreme Court (or "High Court") is also the appellate authority for ruling given by national boards.

Education Services and Health Services, the oldest of "ministerial departments", are in charge of several schools and health services, hospitals and clinics, as well as national and health campaigns conducted locally under the Aga Khan's aegis. Today they are completed by other "ministerial" administrations whose orientations reveal their preoccupation of taking into account present new demands such as youth and sports, the status of women, housing, heritage, etc.

Governance, community life, voluntary work:

Kenya's example

Kenya, the Ismaili Diaspora's favourite country of settlement, is an illustration of this decentralized structure. Part of the fourteen regional constituencies we have already talked about, the Kenyan *darkhana* also includes the Democratic Republic of Congo's (DRC), Burundi's, Rwanda's and South African's *jamatkhana*. With its headquarters in the historic *jamatkhana* premises of Moi Avenue, The Ismaili Board of Kenya

(29) Parallel to sovereign jurisdictions and unique to every country of settlement.

runs the constituency and presides over regional and local boards³⁰. The twenty-two-member board, which meets every three months, is assisted by an executive secretariat in charge of administrative tasks of coordination, management and financial administration³¹.

Despite efforts of social promotion within the community over the last decades, most of the positions of responsibility within the national board and community institutions are still handed down to heirs of old families and direct descendants of the “pioneers” whose dhows left India and reached the Kenyan shore around mid-19th century. These families, which are about twelve in number and whose fortunes date back to years before they emigrated from India, grew rich through their business activities. Most of their family names are prominent at Mombasa’s old *jamatkhana*, on the plaque where the names of successive religious leaders have been inscribed since 1888, which is considered as a charter of nobility within the community. Some of them have been awarded noble titles by the Aga Khan in recognition for their past or present achievements³².

Even though thanks to the three-year term limit in community administration, a new team of leaders is regularly taking over, the permanence and number of positions held by this social minority suggests some sort of aristocracy. Thus the heads of the major institutions: (national board and ministerial agencies, except the education services) all hold noble titles. Whereas every ministerial agency has at least two title holders within its managerial committee, the National Board of Kenya has eight title holders out of twenty-two members³³. Within this leading minority, the first stratum includes members (the grandsons or great grandsons of the old highly prestigious families) which have been ennobled for a long time. Whatever the position they hold, whether they are a *jamatkhana mukhi*, the member of the Ismailia Province Council

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- (30) Provincial boards are those in Nairobi, Mombasa and Kisumu. Local in Kenya are the *jamatkhanas* of Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu, and Eldoret; including local boards of Kinshasa, Bujumbura, Kigali and Pretoria.
- (31) Eight members of the National board of Kenya carry out near “ministerial delegation” duties (communication, legal business, status of women, youth and sports, economy, education, health, welfare). Every “ministerial delegate” coordinates his work with those of local administrative boards previously mentioned: Tariqah and Religious Board (8 members), Grants and Review Board (6 members) Conciliation and Arbitration Board (6 members). The latter board covers four local boards situated in Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu and Kinshasa.
- (32) Male titles (by descending hierarchical order): *diwan*, *vazir*, *aitmadi*, *rai*, *alijah*, *huzur mukhi*; female titles: *diwan saheba*, *vazir saheba*, etc. (Constitution: 37)
- (33) Let us mention Jubilee Fund in which five director positions are held by titled people.

or the head of the Indian Commercial Association, etc. recurring family names can be found in successive terms of office.

Social positions and matrimonial strategies in Kenya

The persistence of class hierarchy and the maintenance of aristocratic precedence must not conceal the importance of social mobility within the community as a whole. Real social mobility has begun. The numbers of institutions created by governance, the abundance of available positions, the launching of new economic programmes, sustainable development projects have offered new generations a whole range of activities. The social promotion which has certainly been gained by individual effort is also the result of both an education policy carried out for decades and of a policy of material and financial assistance to poor background families. Young Ismaili graduates have formed a pool which business men draw their staff from and among which the Aga Khan administration chooses its leaders. These educated and qualified people, who have often been educated in the best Anglo-Saxon universities, can now apply for high-level positions, within and outside the community they come from.

Whatever the social origin of the young elite – more particularly in the upper-class middle – matrimonial alliance strategies are an important means of preserving and strengthening social status. In this patrilineal Muslim society that the Ismaili community represents, the persistence of unions between relatives attests to the permanence of endogamy. The form of recommended unions in all Muslim societies, Ego's preferential marriage with a parallel patrilineal cousin, the father's brother's daughter³⁴, however seems to have now been replaced by the marriage between bilateral cousins. Once it has been extended to a broader family horizon, the relational endogamy rule seems to suit Ismaili aristocratic families willing to seize opportunistic unions without departing from the requirement of class equality. Custodians of old genealogies, the notables can only marry women or men of their standing. "Whoever seeks honour must make himself/herself accepted according to the idea he/she has himself/herself of his/her worth" (Pitt Rivers 1977: 18). One can mention the case of two old families that concluded five marriages between them within the same generation. Isogamic marriages not only endure but are highly considered within the Kenyan Ismaili community

(34) Preferential marriage: ego marriage with patrilineal parallel cousins (daughter of father's brother). Marriage with "cousins": ego marriage with patrilineal cross-cousins (daughter of father's sister), or even more widely ego marriage with patrilineal lineage "cousin".

and the union interplay tallies with some family names in high-level positions.

The geographical area covered by marriages now extends to Western countries, particularly the United Kingdom and Canada. Some Kenyan families who lived abroad agree to conclude distance marriages with young people who have remained in Kenya. Such was the case of a girl living in Canada and who settled in Kenya in order to marry the son of a family that was “close” to hers³⁵.

There are few marriages with spouses from outside the community but there are some. A few Ismailis, who had settled in Western countries, have married European women, particularly in the United Kingdom. Such marriages are scarce and most often occur between intellectuals. As for marriages with Africans, there are no more than a few dozens in Kenya. Such unions run counter to cultural and religious prohibitions since a very small number of African families have adopted the Ismaili religion so far. Mixed Ismaili-African marriages are concentrated on the coastal region and necessarily concern Ismaili men marrying Muslim African women. They hardly ever concern Ismaili women as Ismaili families would not accept to lose their offspring to the girl’s inlaws. The biographical notes that have been gathered corroborate these general observations.

Social and community life

The importance of the time devoted to relationships is a leading aspect of the Ismaili society. Within the framework of community life any Ismaili participates in committees (for young people, women, etc.), charity sports circles, cultural associations; thus he weaves a network of close and permanent relationships associated with precise statute and function.

Social life is characterized by extreme civility that governs interpersonal relations: deference to age and class, display of goodwill meant to avoid any conflict, complimentary comments, etc.³⁶. “Cultivating peace and harmony among the members of the community” is one of the *mukhi*’s duties and it is stipulated in the 1986 Constitution. This code of good manners is expected to avert risks of endogenous implosion.

(35) In the case mentioned, the girl accepted marriage arranged by her parents on condition that she would pursue her studies, which she had hardly started in Canada, in a Kenyan university. After becoming a lawyer, she was admitted to the Bar in Nairobi.

(36) The prophet says: “Goodwill implies that whenever you meet your brother you should be good-natured towards him” (*Hadith* 593).

In the same way as the pledge of allegiance to the Muslim *umma* is regularly professed in order to dispel, according to Gilles Kepel “discord within Islam” (*fitna*), the assertion of community unity guarantees the strength of the social fabric (Kepel 2004: 15).

Community life is also governed by strict rules of adherence to religious practice and obedience to the imam’s prescriptions: daily prayers and major yearly celebrations, some being observed by all Muslims, such as the end of the Ramadan fasting, while others are particular to the Shias and Ismailis, such as the *Nevroz* (new year, celebrated on March 21) and the anniversary of the present imam’s enthronement (Aga Khan IV, 49th imam, July 11).

One of the duties imposed on every Muslim faithful is charitable act of giving alms: *cadaqa* (voluntary alms) and *zakât* (statutory alms). *Zakât*, which is every believer’s participation in the community expenditure legally corresponds to the tenth of the taxpayer’s income, but he may choose to increase it substantially according to his resources. Among the Ismailis, *zakât* is completed by *dasond*, yearly fee equally assessed to the tenth of one’s income. Such fees represent the community’s budget for charities so important in its tradition³⁷.

Discipline is central to the community religious life. One of the articles of the 1986 Constitution lists the acts deserving disciplinary action: abusing Islam or the imam’s person; blasphemies, insulting sacred writings, failure of the faithful to meet obligations and religious duties. Those found guilty are heavily castigated and either threatened with suspension or excluded.

In addition, every country’s national board controls the public declarations and writings for all the faithful. No comment of religious nature can be published without permission. Any meeting or gathering held on behalf of the *jamaat* must also be approved. Any faithful found responsible for any conflict within the community because of his/her declarations or writings, is liable for disciplinary action by the Conciliation and Arbitration Board. Depending on how serious the matter is, the punishment can be simple admonition or temporary suspension from the *jamatkhana*³⁸.

(37) Part of these fees is remitted to the Aga Khan. However, as Michel Adam observes, since the Aga Khan settled in India more than a century and a half ago, he has gathered immense wealth, which makes him largely independent from the collection of the faithful’s incomes” (Adam 2006: 316).

(38) After the lapse of the appellate period, a suspension order is sent to all *jamatkhanas* under the national board’s jurisdiction.

Whereas the Aga Khan's power is both religious and political, including, as already mentioned regalia such as justice, education and public health, and yet imposing on the cosmopolitan community supranational rules in civil, commercial and penal term. Another peculiarity of his consists in interfering in individual behaviour. Thus, assuring a patriarch's role when addressing his children; the Aga Khan indulges in lavishing a father's advice. In one of his December 2003 *talika*, the Aga Khan defined "the ideal Ismaili": not only as an educate individual but curious about what surrounds him, resourceful, creative and bold.

If there is any other community life obligation no Ismaili can be spared, it is voluntary work. Based as the word suggests in English, on the principle of voluntary work (voluntary help), voluntary work can be measured by the yardstick of the time that every faithful dedicates to community activities during his/her lifetime: religious ceremonies, social life, educational work, philanthropic undertakings, etc. In the name of such a principle, it is agreed that everybody, depending on their physical abilities, their skills, their knowledge and financial means, contributes to community life and to its cohesion reinforced by the conviction that, should they need it themselves, they would be able to benefit from other people's assistance and help. "To give people the benefit of their skills and share with them their time and the intellectual and financial resources they have at their disposal can alleviate ordeals, relieve suffering or ignorance. Voluntary work is a deeply-rooted tradition that shapes the whole Ismaili community's social conscience"³⁹. Social voluntary work within the community means helping the elderly, poor families and the children who face academic difficulties. Thus poor families are supported when looking for employment and housing, their children's education and healthcare for the whole family is assumed by the community⁴⁰.

Adults' collaboration in community life is organized in the form of volunteer committees in which women and men are unequally involved⁴¹. The community members who participate in voluntary work as well. They adjust the amount of time they spend on it according to their obligations: from a few hours a week to a few hours a month if they belong to several committees. Volunteers' tasks include mobilizing

(39) *The Ismaili Africa*, March 1998, p. 5.

(40) There are about a hundred such families in Kenya, which amounts to about 400 people.

(41) However, it appears during professional activity, women's participation is higher than men's participation.

funds for the numerous joint activities or soliciting donations in kind for the organization of celebrations. According to needs, announcements are made in the *jamatkhana* premises to appeal for volunteers. The community knows it won't run short of volunteers, just like there is a three-year turnover among the leaders; a volunteer does not usually fulfil a duty within the same institution beyond that length of time. On the other hand, a volunteer is used to carrying out one activity after the other within several institutions⁴². Just like community administration duties, the high-level voluntary tasks are generally entrusted to elderly men who have held important professional responsibilities.

The volunteer committees' first activity consists in taking care of the *jamatkhana*'s social life such as security, decorating and cleaning communal buildings, preparing festive meals. That is why the meals offered for funerals are prepared by volunteer women since it is a rule that on such occasion the deceased's family should be relieved from that task⁴³. On the other hand, the men are expected to carry the body and lower it into the grave, while the *mukhi* leads the religious service. Men also have the responsibility of teaching children both religion and *ginâns*, the devotional poems inspired by the very old Khoja Nizarite tradition⁴⁴.

Women's committees are very active. In the name of Muslim unity (*umma*), some of the women committees have attempted to reach out to Sunni women's with a view to carrying out charity work with them or celebrating major religious celebrations such as the Prophet's birthday⁴⁵.

(42) For instance, a woman who taught at secondary school level for a period of about twenty years before becoming an assistant manager in a NGO after studying Economics was a member of the Nairobi Board for three years, honorary secretary of the National Board of Kenya and member of National Conciliation and Arbitration Board. These temporary responsibilities were in addition to constant involvement in a women's committee started about thirty years ago.

(43) Since a couple of years, some women's committees have also prepared cooked dishes which are sold cheaply to students and women from modest backgrounds engaged in professional activity.

(44) The men charged with religious teaching are chosen by an ad hoc committee from among the group of elders. Derived from Sanskrit, the term *ginân* refers to religious literature. The literary body of *Ginâns* comprises over 1,000 chanted poems. This tradition reflects historic, social, cultural and political contexts in the Indian sub-continent in the medieval times, especially in Sindh Province and other north-western Indian regions. "Created by religious leaders known then as *Pirs*, these hymns were initially passed on orally" (Daftary 2003: 267).

(45) It is worth noting that this tendency is also desired by some liberal Sunni associations like the Muslim Civic Education Trust and the Muslim Mombasa Association. The latter declares that its mission is to open up to all Muslims, male and female, whatever their beliefs (August 20, 2004). The Muslim Civic Education Trust, which describes Mombasa as "Kenya's un-crowned Muslim capital", was established with the support of Professor

Nevertheless, one of the main activities of the women's committees consists in implementing urban development programmes (Sustainable Development Programmes). Launched in Nairobi's Mathare Valley and Kibera slums, two of these programmes aim at providing plots of land and seeds to young isolated women; so they are able to grow food crops and feed their families. Women's committees have also come up with the forms of positive assistance. They produce cheap domestic fuel, pottery, crocheted dish covers, sewing machines, etc. Several associations, supported by clubs with a strong Indian membership in East Africa (East African Women's Club, Kenya's Rotary Club, Lions Club International and Hope Foundation)⁴⁶ contribute to backing such projects. In addition to such committees, some well-off families have also created their own charity work centres, thus providing a place where women volunteers can occasionally take care of street children and dropouts (drug-addicts, alcoholics, prostitutes) and can occasionally teach the basic elements of education.

Young children's upbringing illustrates every Ismaili's process of integration into the religious and social life of the community. Within their family and from a very early age, children are initiated to prayer and meditation. They are taught religion every Saturday either at school, if they attend an Ismaili school, or at the *jamatkhana*, if they attend a state-run school. Strict discipline is required when carrying out religious duties. Voluntary work which children participate in from a very early age helps integrate them into community life. Wearing different badges and uniforms, they are integrated from primary school age into the "cadets" group then into the "young volunteers". In the community premises, they are initiated into petty communal activities: guiding elderly people, cleaning and arranging the premises, etc.⁴⁷

Mohamed Hyder. Its aim was to get all Muslims to reflect and to participate in Kenya's constitution review process with a view to achieving wider justice and a more tolerant and democratic society.

- (46) Another project was initiated in the Kibera slums for teenagers. The Kibera Girls Centre has a large piece of land – donated by Kenya Railways – on which two class rooms, sanitary facilities, an open-air kitchen were constructed and vegetable garden planted. The centre brings together female teenagers, who are frequently accompanied by their younger brothers and sisters, who generally do not go to school and live from begging. They receive basic education as well as sex education aimed to inform them about AIDS risks. They are also initiated to needlework (sewing, crocheting, and knitting) as well as to the production of key chains, necklaces and bracelets from colourful beads. At noon all the children are provided with one meal prepared by their elder sisters.
- (47) The Tariqah Board, which supervises this organization, hold every year a week-long Religious Education Festival bringing together about 300 youngsters from all over the country who meet in workshops. In addition to the workshops programme, there are

Created in 1977 by the Aga Khan and intended for six to ten year-old children, the Ta'lim programme aims to familiarize them with the Muslim religion and Islamic culture. This programme complements involvement in voluntary activities while emphasizing the need to take on responsibilities and duties, both within the community and the general society of every country of residence.

Community policy

Heading all community policy activities at the international level, the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) is a kind of agency coordinating the network of Ismaili businesses some of them in the industrial and commercial sectors, while others work for charities often benefiting non-Ismailis⁴⁸. AKDN officials have specific mandates “ranging from health and education to architecture, from rural development to business development in the private sector. They work together towards a common goal, which is to set up institutions and programmes likely to stand up to the challenge of social, economic and cultural change”.

The AKDN, which has a complex structure, is a federation of several organizations: the Aga Khan Foundation (education and health), the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (culture and heritage), the Aga Khan for Economic Development or AKFED which coordinates industrial and business activities. As for some institutions in the economic development sector (AKFED), in the social development (Aga Khan Foundation or AKF) and culture (universities, Aga Khan Trust for Culture or AKTC), they have been grouped together transversely under the APEX, *Karachi Aga Khan, the A.K. Development Fund (AKFED) and the A.K. Trust for Culture (AKTC)*.

Education and health policy

Health and education are the Ismailis' priority in matters of political commitments. In every country hosting the Aga Khan's followers, everybody knows the Ismaili educational institutions and hospitals, which are well-known for quality service. Of course, the members of the Ismaili community are among the first to benefit from such a policy

studies on art history and Islamic architecture, manual work, and sports. Each day ends with the reading and study of religious writings. Young volunteers (known as “advisers”) run the festival under the authority of members of the Tariqah Board.

(48) “The deep and underlying reason behind the creation of this network is the moral principle that the suffering of the needy in society must be shared by all”, *The Aga Khan Development Network in East Africa. An Introduction Brochure* (2003: 2).

which they have widely financed. However, the departments that have been set up are open to every one although most patients have to pay for admission which can be expensive. Yet, as we have already mentioned, some services such as dispensaries, popular education programmes remain free for underprivileged populations, particularly African ones. Long-term education policies initiated by Aga Khan III and taken up by his successor set up ambitious programmes since 1986. The rise in the standard of education since the beginning of the 20th century with the creation of schools in various cities and regions of the country, the present objectives of such a policy are to educate pupils likely to join East African universities and possibly Anglo-Saxon ones at the end of secondary education. The general direction of the education policy is the Aga Khan's government's responsibility. Such policies affect all the communities in the Diaspora while taking into account the regional peculiarities they strive to adjust to. At the level of every decentralized constituency, it is up to the regional education agencies (Education Planning Board) to make such adjustments.

At the time of the British protectorate, the discrimination policies that dispatched "Asians" and Africans to few public schools motivated the Ismaili community to open its own schools. Although created in 1905 by Aga Khan III, regional and local education agencies were unable to set up independent courses of study. Opened as late as 1948, the Nairobi Ismaili School benefited from the funds allocated as early as 1920 by the British colonial authorities to Indian private schools. Under the impulse of Joan Aga Khan, the present Aga Khan's mother, other schools were opened in Western Kenya (Kisumu: 1951; Eldoret: 1954). Today, the Ismaili community in Kenya boasts five primary schools: two in Nairobi, two in Mombasa, one in Kisumu and four secondary schools: two in Nairobi, two in Mombasa.

Improving the quality of the education system has been a major and constant concern among community leaders. Course reviewing, curriculum rewriting and teachers' training have been high priorities in the Education Planning Board's agenda. For a while two specific areas: on the one hand very young children's education, traditionally left to families and on the other religious initiation, provided by Koranic schools, were not controlled by the Ismaili Planning Board. After parents demanded the opening of nursery schools, the Aga Khan Foundation inaugurated a preschool *madrassa*⁴⁹ for little children in Mombasa, in

(49) *Madrassa*: school where mainly religious education is provided.

1986, which combined secular education in the morning and religious education in the afternoon (Topan 1998: 299-305; Khamis 1998: 289-297). The success of this experience exceeded its initiators' expectations. When it spread to other East African countries, it aroused the Kenyan government's interest and got World Bank support⁵⁰. Besides, improving education standards in both the primary and secondary levels of education has been an absolute priority for the last twenty years. After setting up a complementary teacher-training programme (School Improvement Programme, 1990-2005), Ismaili secondary schools introduced the International Baccalaureate⁵¹ to make it easier for students who graduated from secondary school⁵² to enter Anglo-Saxon Universities.

The creation of excellence centres meant to train elite students was the next stage in perfecting the education system. The first of such centres known as "Academy" opened in Mombasa in 2003, heralding the creation of about twenty other "Academies" in Africa and Asia. Registering 600

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- (50) In 1995, the Aga Khan Foundation created three regional nursery school teachers' training centres (Madrasa Resource Centres) in Mombasa, Zanzibar and Kampala. Leaving the running of the pre-school *madrasa* to local communities, the Madrasa Resource Centres signed partnership agreements with the latter. It became imperative to elect school committees. Community members and leaders had to participate in these elections. The school committees, which were charged with managing school premises, selected applicants for the teachers' training (applicants had to have at least ten years of schooling experience and the successful applicants then received two-year training). After the signing of the partnership agreement, the Madrasa Resource Centre officials also carried out training for nursery school administrators and took charge of maintenance of the premises *East Africa AKF*, Nairobi, 2000: 3). In addition, the Aga Khan Foundation initiated collaboration with officials of the Kenya early childhood education programme funded by the World Bank. This cooperation resulted in interest beyond the Kenyan borders and East Africa. A conference held in Kampala in 1999 on this pilot project brought together education specialists from 26 countries and attracted several West African governments. In November 2001, the Aga Khan Foundation and the World Bank organized in Brussels a round table conference on Early Child Development which brought together 40 international experts, including European decision-makers, foundations, non-governmental organizations and representatives from the private sector.
- (51) International Baccalaureate or IB comes after the fourth year of secondary education (Form 4). In Kenya, like in other countries where there is British influence, the education system follows the "8-4-4" formula since 1984: eight years of primary education (Standard 1 to 8), four years of secondary education (Form 1 to 4) and four years of higher education. Access to secondary education is dependent on obtaining the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE). Higher education is determined by the results obtained in the exam of the final year of secondary education (O level). This system replaced a previous system called "7-6-3".
- (52) Funding for complementary teachers training was mobilized from local communities. It is worth noting that according to the terms of the partnership agreements with the Kenyan government, financial commitment by parents (school fees) covers 2/3 of the costs of education in 1998, with the Kenyan Ministry of the Education being responsible for the remuneration of teachers (*East Africa, AKF. School Improvement Programme*, 2002: 2).

pupils from primary to IB (International Baccalaureate), today this important school complex provides intensive education based on the mastery of languages and basic disciplines (mathematics, physics and life sciences, written and oral expression)⁵³ in a luxurious environment.

In the Ismail policy makers' eyes, educating the young leading elite responds to the need of ensuring continuity and strengthening the economic, social and political foundation of a community characterized by its Diaspora situation. Equipped with the best Anglo-Saxon university degrees and capable of playing at the highest level the transnational interlocutors' role, the future representatives of the community administration are both ready to launch into private careers and to remain faithful to the interests of their community⁵⁴. The final aspect of education policies emphasized by the Aga Khan since 1999 is the need to create professional training centres, particularly for public education, rural development and health. Run from Dar-es-Salaam, several Professional Development Centres have been set up in the three East African countries. In the area of public education, such centres train school teachers, inspectors, heads and administration officials. Meant for young university graduates, training in rural development and public health policies has been the latest initiative (Young Development Professionals Programme). International academic partnerships support such programmes, and so do other international institutions⁵⁵.

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- (53) Situated in the middle of a campus overlooking the Indian Ocean, the Mombasa "Academy" occupies a splendid building put up in two years by Ismaili architects. The school, which observes strict gender parity, is composed of 75% of Kenyans (most of them of Indian origin) while 25% are foreign students (from other African countries, Europe, etc.). Muslim pupils (accounting for 40%, 12% of which are Ismailis) are a minority, with the rest of the school (60%) professing various religions (Hindu, Jains, Sikh, Christian). Boarding pupils are 40% of the registered number. There are about sixty teachers. The pupils have ultra modern facilities comparable to those in the best Anglo-Saxon schools: sports grounds, swimming pools, science and language laboratories, computer rooms, art and music workshops, library, prayer area, theatre. Receiving a complete dominantly multilingual education (literature, languages, sciences and arts, sport), "they are destined", says the school profile brochure, "to become citizens of the world, prepared to work in a globalized world" (*The Aga Khan Academies. Excellence in Education*, brochure 2003, p.14 & *The Ismaili*, n°37, mars 2004). The biography of the "Academy" director is an example of the extreme geographical mobility of many of the community leaders. Born in Pakistan, he went to high school and university in Canada and began his teaching career there before he was recruited as a school director in Nairobi. The transfer of Ismaili community officials from one Ismaili community to another and from one country to another is very frequent in all areas of activity.
- (54) The feeling of superiority by the Ismaili is best described by the following extract from an article written by an Ismaili author: "In their relations with other communities, (Ismailis) consider themselves more dynamic and progressive than others, who end up imitating them" (Azim Nanji 1974: 135).
- (55) Among the university partners, it is worth mentioning Harvard, McGill, Toronto, Oxford, and Graduate School of Public Development in South Africa. Technical and financial

As far as health policy is concerned, dispensaries have been set up in Kenya since the beginning of the 20th century on Aga Khan III's initiative. They soon proved insufficient to cater for "people at risk" such as pregnant women and infants. That's the reason why Mombasa, Kisumu and Nairobi community hospitals were built (1957). Expanded and modernized between 2000 and 2004, the Ismaili Hospital in Nairobi, better known as Aga Khan Hospital, has since then become one of the most important hospitals in East Africa⁵⁶. Bound by a cooperation agreement with the Karachi University's Medical School, it employs 1,400 people and over one hundred doctors⁵⁷.

As for the network of dispensaries, it soon became obvious that, despite its modernization due to the Aga Khan Foundations' support it was unable to implement a prevention policy including grassroots education on subjects such as the use of water, hygiene, nutrition and vaccination⁵⁸.

Kenya also faced serious difficulties owing to widespread infectious and parasitic diseases such as gastroenteritis, AIDS, malaria to a high mortality rate among women in childbirth and to the worsening of certain diseases, cardio-vascular conditions in particular. Such a situation required the training of qualified nurses, who would be able to diagnose serious medical situations and deal with them. This is what the cooperation agreement signed in 1992 between the Aga Khan and the Government of Kenya set out to achieve. Planned in 1993, a nursing-school common to the three East African countries was opened in Nairobi in 1999 with branches in Mombasa, Dar-es-Salaam and Kampala⁵⁹. The Ismaili health services administration announced that between 2002 and 2007, 1,500 nurses would have completed their whole training and would have graduated. In order to adjust to the demands

support has been proposed by private foundations and various international institutions: Ford Foundation, European Commission, UNICEF, World Bank.

- (56) Thanks to a 80 million-dollar allocation and a donation from Ismaili communities, the hospital recently acquired a new laboratory and MRI facilities.
- (57) Established by Aga Khan IV in 1985, the University of Karachi has a large faculty of medicine, a nursing school and a referral hospital. Doctor heads of departments at Nairobi's Aga Khan Hospital, who are likely to be recruited locally and have many Africans in their ranks, are distributed into 77 resident doctors, 59 consultant doctors and 250 foreign doctors accredited by the hospital board. The hospital is administered by an Ismaili. The management board has eleven members, but only one non-Ismaili who is of Yemeni origin and head of the medical department.
- (58) In 2004, the Aga Khan Health Services managed 325 health centres in East Africa (outside Kenya's semi-arid area).
- (59) The goal of these schools is to train both highly qualified hospital nurses and rural nurses able to handle cases of illnesses as just described (Aga Khan Foundation, *Advanced Nursing Studies Programme, East Africa*, April 2001: 1.)

from various partners (the governments of the three countries, health departments, medical staff) it was decided that between 2008 and 2012 such programmes would be reviewed, with the aim of developing a common curriculum for all East African nurses⁶⁰.

Cultural work

The Aga Khan Trust for Culture oversees various programmes aimed at promoting education and restoring monuments and arts: the Education and Culture Programmes; the Aga Khan Award for Architecture; the Historic Cities Support Programme. Launched in 1962, that programme concentrated on the conservation and rehabilitation of urban areas and historic buildings in the Muslim world⁶¹. An international award for architecture was created to reward contemporary creators. Funds were set aside for the rehabilitation of Islamic architectural heritage while others were allocated to the collection and promotion of the traditional arts in Muslim countries, handicraft, music, dance, poetry⁶².

Be adventurous: Boom in economic activities

What can be a better “close protection” for a family business (Castel 1995: 34) than being run by its creator’s direct descendants? The patrimonial nature of Indian businesses has not been an obstacle to “entrepreneurial” dynamism of which Ismailis are a remarkable example. Since the era of Aga Khan III’s imamate the encouragement of private business, particularly industrial enterprise, has indeed been a sort of *leitmotiv* of Ismaili policy, an objective that Aga Khan IV has largely embraced and

(60) Aga Khan IV received in June 2001 the prestigious Archon Award in recognition of his work to realize the nursing care programme. “ANS Programme”, *East Africa*, AKDN, January 2003.

(61) Since its introduction, the Historic Cities Support Programme launched about twenty projects, including the creation of a park in Cairo, the rehabilitation of the old city of Zanzibar (Stone Town), the restoration of old forts in northern Pakistan and restoration of Alep and Samarkand urban centres. In Zanzibar, a Swedish agency participates in the restoration work. In 1988, the Aga Khan organized a seminary on housing in Zanzibar to which he invited international architects to put them on to Swahili culture – which he described in his opening speech as “a rich tapestry woven over centuries” – and arouse their interest in regional cultures. The Aga Khan Trust for Culture is complemented by a programme that aims at establishing a list of major works that are likely to be targeted for conservation or rehabilitation.

(62) Thus academic programmes on Islamic architecture have been funded at Harvard University and at MIT.

amplified. Following the early creation of Jubilee Insurance Company in 1937 (insurance and property acquisition), the Investment Trust (middle and long term credit), the Industrial Promotion Services (1963), the Tourism Promotion Service (1971), the Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development (1984) are institutional and financial tools that serve the community, there are companies partially controlled by the Aga Khan's government and for several of them working for him⁶³.

Although they serve private investment projects, the Industrial Promotion Service (IPS) set rules, that is to say namely: the preferential use of local resources without overexploiting them, respect for the environment, use of techniques adapted to local contexts; the training of local manpower, the exportation of a part of the production.

The return to free enterprise in Tanzania in the early 1980s and the opening of a regional free trade area in 1981 offered the private sector unprecedented opportunities.

The IPS's success in East Africa, where it spread its network of subsidiaries, encouraged the group to develop strategies based on the experience gained: investment in infrastructure, more precisely in telecommunications and electricity generation. The construction of a power plant in Mombasa (Kipuvu II) called for a joint venture⁶⁴. IPS-Uganda and IPS-Tanzania joined forces with IPS-Kenya to develop the entire industrial sector and launch projects at the level of East African economic space. The companies mastering local working conditions on one hand and the IPS guaranteeing thorough management, on the other, foreign investors were convinced to get involved in the sectors under its control. The number of partnership projects rose from sixty in 1990 to eighty in 2004⁶⁵. The Ismailis who were particularly active in the food industry (Premier Foods Industries, Farmer's Choice), textiles (Kamyn Industries), mechanics (Ukulima Tools, Wire Products), plastics (Plastics and Rubber Industries), expanded their activities to other areas of production. Among the businesses that got IPS support, three had remarkable results. The leading exporter of packaged fresh vegetables, particularly French beans on European markets, Frigoken Company is supplied by African small- scale farmers (21,000 presently).

(63) The capital of the financial institutions is in principle composed of 50% of funds belonging to the Aga Khan, while the rest belongs to community faithful.

(64) With the volume of investments estimated at 86 million dollars, a joint venture was entered into with Cinergy Power (American company), the International Finance Corporation, the Commonwealth Development Corporation and the Deutsche Entwicklungsgesellschaft.

(65) *The Aga Khan Development Network in East Africa* (2006: 23).

Based in Nairobi and well-established on the East African markets, Kenya Litho Ltd specializes in the manufacture of packaging material and printing (soft and hard packaging material, labels, the printing of various brochures and books). After expanding to Tanzania (1994) and Uganda (1995) the Leather Industries of Kenya (Thika), became the main leather producer in East Africa and one of the leading exporters on the European market.

Table 5.1 Industrial Promotion Services, L.P.S

Name	Place	Area of activity
Allpack Industries Ltd	Nairobi	Manufacture of cardboard boxes and packaging material
Frigoken	Nairobi	Fresh and deep-frozen fresh vegetables
Kamyn Industries Ltd	Mombasa	Hosiery
Kenya Jojoba Industries Ltd	Voi	Jojoba growing, oil
Leather Industries Kenya Ltd.	Thika	Leather, Hide treatment
Novaskins Tannery Ltd.	Thika	Goat hide treatment
Plastics and Rubber Ind.	Nairobi	Manufacture of plastics and rubber
Premier Food Industries Ltd.	Nairobi	Tinned vegetables and fruits
Safari Lodge Properties Ltd.	Nairobi	Lodges and hotels
Services and Systems Ltd.	Nairobi	Services Company
Tourism Promotion Services	Nairobi	Tourism Direction
Ukulima Tools Ltd.	Nairobi	Manufacture of farm implements
Wire Products Ltd.	Nairobi	Wire works

Source: AKFED, brochure, 2003

Another area of successful activity where Ismailis have drawn attention is tourism. As early as the 1970s, the Tourism Promotion Services (TPS) had begun building or buying hotels and lodges. In 2004, Ismailis owned five luxury hotels (Serena hotels) and five lodges based in animal reserves in East Africa⁶⁶. This programme, which includes Tanzania, has even registered further growth (Lake Manyara, Ngorongoro Crater, Serengeti

(66) TPS works in partnership with the British Airways and Lufthansa.

Reserve and Zanzibar Island)⁶⁷. Concerned about the environment and local architecture, the Aga Khan personally ensured that the style of construction was faithful to local tradition and personally did his best to use local labour resources. After many trees had been destroyed by vagaries of weather in one of the Kenyan reserves, the Tourism Promotion Services undertook to plant 20,000 trees in replacement⁶⁸. “This respect for the environment was recognized by international organizations and recommended as a model for every other investor in East Africa”⁶⁹. According to the Aga Khan, such “a cautious tourism” has had a number of positive effects: the revival of ancient traditions in construction, the respect of ecology and the environment, the creation of jobs, the training of skilled labour forces⁷⁰. The maxim that projects must follow is: minimising impact on the environment and maximising socio- economic gains⁷¹.

The expansion of industrial and business activities at the regional level spread to the insurance sector, in which Ismailis have been experienced for a long time. East Africa’s oldest insurance company, Jubilee Insurance went through the tumultuous 1960s while it had to close its Ugandan and Tanzanian branches. Listed in the Nairobi Stock Exchange since 1984, the Jubilee Insurance Company has become one of the most important insurance companies in East Africa. Following a significant surge in capital, it reopened its branches in Uganda and Tanzania.

Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development

The press and the media more generally speaking, have long attracted the Ismailis. Created in 1960, the Nation Media Group is the largest media group in East Africa today. The Nation Newspaper Ltd, which is the Nairobi-based publisher of the *Daily Nation* the reference daily and its weekly edition *Sunday Nation*, also publishes the *Taifa*, the national weekly Coast Express and the regional weekly *The East African*. Owners of a television channel and radio station in Kenya (*Nation TV* and

(67) In Zanzibar, an old dispensary built back in 1880 was converted into a tourist attraction after it was renovated entirely according to local architecture.

(68) These vagaries of weather were aggravated by destruction during lodge construction. The Aga Khan’s initiative earned him the “2000 Asta Environment Award”.

(69) AKFED (2003: 9).

(70) In 2003, there were only two foreigners (expatriates) out of the 1,300 employees in the tourism sector.

(71) Buoyed by the success it achieved in Kenya, the Serena Hotels Programme was extended to Pakistan where six hotels were built. In Maputo (Mozambique), Hotel Polona was acquired from its South African owners and transformed into Serena.

Nation Broadcasting), the Ismailis are also well established in the Ugandan and Tanzanian media sectors. In either country, they own a daily newspaper including one also published in Swahili: *The Monitor* (Kampala) and *Mwananchi* (*The Citizen*, Dar-es-Salaam) as well as a radio-station partly broadcasting in Swahili: *Monitor FM* (Kampala) and *Radio Uhuru* (Dar-es-Salaam).

With a situation so favourable to free market business, the Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development has acted as a catalyst in the creation of a regional bank: the Diamond Trust Bank Kenya, (DTBK). The Aga Khan expanded his area of operation: investment funds, insurance companies, property development have been integrated into the DTBK⁷². Its interventions consist in funding medium and long-term loans, in assessing the projects that are put forward and relating with possible partners. One of the guiding principles is first and foremost to guarantee transparency in financial transactions so as to contribute to fighting money laundering, drug trafficking, the funding of terrorist activities⁷³... Diamond Trust Bank now has many branches in Uganda and Tanzania. A holding company, the Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development (AKFED) directly or indirectly coordinates all economic activities controlled by Ismaili community administration. Operating in about 15 countries⁷⁴ and in control of assets whose value is estimated to more than 1.5 billion dollars, the AKFED oversees the running of 90 companies which themselves employ 30,000 people⁷⁵.

(72) Running several property development projects (including a high-class residential property in Nairobi's Milimani area), the Industrial Promotion Building Ltd owns and manages buildings that house Ismaili institutions' activities. Let us in particular mention the Nation Centre in Nairobi's downtown.

(73) Dirty financial transactions have in different periods soiled the "reputation of the Indian community as a whole" (Adam 2006: 294). In the 1980s, Indian communities, which remained sensitive to the volatile political situation in Kenya, expatriated their profits. These communities, which "controlled then about 70% of the business in Nairobi", were assured of support by the Indian middlemen around President Moi. The sum of their wealth abroad was such that the "IMF officially expressed concern to the Kenyan Government" (Grignon 1998: 335). Though confidence seemed to have been restored at the end of the decade, it dissipated once again in the 1990s when "Trade Bank, one of the country's most modern and glamorous banks" lost political protection and became insoluble as its head fled to Canada (Otenyo 1998: 280).

(74) Eight countries in East and West Africa in addition to Madagascar and Mauritius, four countries in Asia and three countries in Europe and America (United Kingdom, France and Canada).

(75) AKDN, *Le Réseau Aga Khan de développement* (2008: 15).

Table 5.2 Financial Institutions

Uganda	Kenya	Tanzania
Diamond Trust Bank Ltd. (Uganda)	Diamond Trust of Kenya, Ltd	Diamond Jubilee Investment Trust Ltd. (Tanzania)
Diamond Jubilee Investment Trust Ltd. (Uganda) Jubilee Insurance Company of Uganda	Diamond Trust Properties Jubilee Insurance Company Ltd.	
Jubilee Investment Ltd. (Uganda)	Industrial Promotion Buildings	

Although the institution commits its own capital, it seek partners since the amount of money needed for investment usually exceeds its intervention potential in large scale projects (power-stations, etc.). It also helps bridge the gap between funds contributed by the AKFED and those occasionally approved by governments.

Taking risks is among the Aga Khan’s recommendations. “Be adventurous”, he urges his followers. From the shopkeeper to the head of a company, everyone should remain on the alert to be able to assess the present situation and anticipate. Even though they fell victims to historical risks, the Ismailis have shown they could seize opportunities that arose, even though they may have been accused of being opportunists sometimes. Aware of new prospects of economic globalization, Ismailis can both rely on community protection and considerable transnational networks, since the Diaspora international scattering does not hinder experts: (engineers, IT experts, doctors and accountants) to interfere wherever they choose.

Table 5.3 AKDN partners in East Africa

African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF)
Book Aid international
British Airways
Canadian international Development Agency (CIDA)
CARE (Kenya)
Charity Projects
Commonwealth Development Corporation (CDC)

Deutsche Entwicklungsgesellschaft (DEG)
East African Development Bank
European Commission
European Investment Bank
Found Foundation
Government of the Republic of Kenya
Government of Japan
Government of the Republic of Uganda International Finance Corporation (IFC) Japan Labour Welfare Corporation Ministry of Education, Zanzibar
Department for International Development (DFID) Proparco
Rahimtulla Trust
United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
United Nation's Children's Fund (UNICEF)
Volunteer Service Overseas (VSO)

Source: The Aga Khan Development Network in East Africa, AKFED, 2003

Conclusion

The last two Aga Khans have restored a centralised government that had long disappeared. Aga Khan III led his followers on the way to modernity surrounding them with care and affection: "Dear beloved spiritual children, Africa is always close to my heart and my mind" (*Talika*, Cannes, 1953). Not only was the spiritual leader who could show the way, he also became a pragmatic worldly leader who explained in details the work to be undertaken so that everyone could understand. He demanded that his disciples should partly abandon some of the cultural memories attached to their Indian past. Such memories that Ferdinand Braudel beautifully calls "the obstinate vegetation of previous diversity" impeded the accelerated modernisation he imposed on them, which according to him would result "in feeling better in a better world".

Aga Khan IV brought together all the Ismaili communities scattered on faraway lands; he gave them a framework of political, social, economic and cultural institutions. He committed his followers to a programme of educational projects, created higher education centres, launched numerous sustainable development programmes under the tutelage of the Aga Khan Foundation and the Aga Khan Development Network. Finally, he encouraged the creation of businesses, which "in this globalized world" should take advantage of international economic

and financial networks and extolled the opportunities offered by the expansion of the Islamic space. A champion of free enterprise market, he is a convinced leader who seems to be convincing.

The Aga Khan's writings all insist on the importance of volunteers in *imamat* activities. Based on community life, which cements the close relationship between the members of this minority community, voluntary work contributes to creating a remarkable cohesion and confirms the ties of solidarity among its members. One question lingers though; this community offers a seamless and apparently flawless façade. Truly, it went through a number of upheavals that shattered its balance in the 19th century but its life since then seems to have been inspired by "a spirit of friendship, courtesy and harmony". The changes in behaviour imposed on them may have met with resistance; they might have fuelled tensions and might even have bred bitter resentments. However, to the outsider, nothing of the sort seems to have happened recently. Given that any expression of conflict might lead to the assumption that the community is weak, it should, according to the age-old *taqiyya* tradition, be "carefully" avoided.

Ismailism seeks to extol tolerance as a virtue. Islam's present image that some fundamentalists display to the world is a worrying and retrogressive idea. Not only does Ismailism choose to be discrete on the international scene but also reassuring, by offering the example of cultured, obviously affluent but also generous society.

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Bohras in East Africa: Orthodoxy and Reformism

Nathalie GOMES

This chapter analyses the origins as well as the socioeconomic situation of the Bohra communities in East Africa, especially in Kenya. Although particular attention here is focused on the “traditional” mainstream – which is by far the majority – the intention of the study is not to ignore the existence of a minute breakaway “reformist” section, which is very active in the diaspora¹.

Part of the Shia Muslim minority, the Bohra (also known as Daudi Bohra or Dawoodi Tayyibites) are a secondary branch of Ismailis, with the latter term used to refer to the Aga Khan’s followers, who are also known as Khojas. With the exception of publications by Roy (1984), Engineer (1989) and Blank (2001), there has been little writing on this small religious community (whose population is about a million in the world, including 800,000 residents in India), but which makes up a sizeable section of the Indian-Pakistani diaspora². In 2004, Bohras in Kenya constituted a little more than 30% of all the Shia, which is equivalent to 6,500 people, a figure that is lower than that of Khoja Ismailis (about 8,000 in number), but largely higher than that of the

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- (1) Inventory of literature on this topic was accomplished in Kenya through research on archives. The study was also based on interviews with representatives of the two majority and reformist sections.
 - (2) According to Engineer (1989), there were, in 1980, 70,000 Bohras resident outside India, especially in Pakistan (30,000), Tanzania (7,500), Madagascar (6,500) and Kenya (5,800). Other estimates quote a general figure of 1.2 million Bohra faithful.

Ithnasheris (2,500 in number), another Shia group close to the orthodox section of the duodecimans, which is the majority in the world.

Fissions and the diaspora

Bohras are descendants of a section of Ismailis who seceded in the early 12th Century AD following a dispute over succession of their thirteenth Imam, Al-Mustansir, also caliph of Egypt's Fatimids (1094). The unsuccessful pretender, Al Tayyib, took refuge in Yemen, became a recluse (*satr*) and disappeared from the eyes of the world (1132). Ever since his followers (since then known Tayyibites) believe their Imam is in hiding, but will reappear one day. As this anticipation, his power has been delegated to a representative called chief *mulla* or *dai'al-mutlaq* ("holy delegate", abridged: Dai). Interim Imam of sorts, the Dai is, like the living Imam of the Ismailis, the custodian of esoteric knowledge for interpreting the Koran (*ta'wil*) as well as some supernatural attributes that are akin to the "hidden Imam". According to popular beliefs, only the Dai knows where the authentic Imam, who has for 900 years been secluded from the world, lives.

Whereas Yemen became the centre for the break-away group, traders professing the new faith settled in north-western India from the 13th Century, following maritime routes that had been used for several centuries. Thus some Tayyibite adherents who accompanied these traders resolved to convert Cutch and Gujarat Hindus. These converts were nicknamed Bohra, an anthroponym derived from the term Gujarati *vohoru* ("trader"). The Bohra community, which was initially concentrated in Ahmedabad, suffered persecution at the hands of Aurengzeb Moghol monarchs and scattered in the entire Gujarat area up to Bombay (Salvadori 1983: 256).

Soon the number of confirmed faithful in India exceeded that in Yemen. In 1591, the geographical distance between the two groups, Yemeni and Indian Bohra, was coupled with a political and religious scission. Dawud Burhan al-Din was enthroned the twenty-sixth Dai in Sihpur (Bombay), while a rival candidate, Suleyman al-Hasan, claimed he had been made Dai at an inauguration in Yemen. This rivalry was the beginning of a fresh dissidence that pitted the Dawoodis of India (Dawud's followers, who are today generally confused with the Bohra) and the Suleymanites in Yemen, who in the meantime became a very tiny minority (about 70,000 people in 2008).

Main religious characteristics

Like all Indian Muslims, the Bohra have a syncretised culture, characterized by influence of the Arab world as much as it is inherited from their origins in India, their ancestral land where Hinduism is dominant.

From a theological point of view, the Bohra hardly differ from the orthodox Ismailis except for their belief in the existence of a hidden imam. Like the latter – and in contrast with other Muslims – they believe in an esoteric interpretation of the Koran whose key, according to them, is in the Dai’s custody³. From their point of view, this interpretation – as non-literal and detached as possible from its strictly historic context – must remain secret (*batiniyya*), which does not stop the Bohra from loudly proclaiming some of the principles that distinguish them from Sunnism (and even orthodox Shiism), such as rejection of holy war (*jihad*), which in their understanding is reduced to an internal fight against evil. The practice of *batiniyya* among the Bohra contributed to the emergence of some sort of aura of secrecy, which has been strengthened over the centuries by the persecution.

Table 6.1

Bohra Genealogy	
Mohammed	
Ali (prophet’s cousin and son-in law)	Abu Bakr (prophet’s father-in law)
	Omar
	Othman
	Mu’awiya
Shia	Sunnis
Hussein (murdered in 680) by Mu’awiya’s son,	
Ja’far (6th imam, died in 765)	
Ismailis lineage	Lineage of orthodox Shia
Musa al Kasim	
(7th imam of orthodox Shia)	

(3) The contrast between those adherents to literal interpretation (*Ahl al Zahir*) and adherents to esoteric interpretation (*Ahl al Batin*) exists throughout the history of Islam since its origins.

Bohra Genealogy

Ismael

(1st imam of the Ismailis)

Mohamed Abu al Qasim,
12th imam
(or Al-Mahdi, the hidden Imam,
who disappeared in 880)

Al-Mustansir

13th imam of the Ismailis

Caliph of Egypt's Fatimids

(died in 1094)

Lineage of the Bohra

Al-Tayyib (disappeared in 1132)

Al Dhu'al, 1st Dai (1151)

Dawud Burhan al Din, 26th Dai (1591) Suleyman al Hasan

Dissident Dai
(Yemen)

Syedna Muhammed Burhanuddin, 52th Dai (1966...)

It should be noted further that the original body of Ismaili gloss was destroyed in the 12th century when the Abbasids seized Fatimid Caliphate in Cairo.

Just like Ithnasherais and orthodox Shia, but in contrast with Ismailis, Bohras are greatly devoted to their martyrs, the symbols of the persecution they collectively suffered. In the month of Muharram, they mark ten days of mourning and repentance, praying and practicing *matam*, a ritual during which the faithful hit themselves on the chest, but they do not go as far as observing mortification rituals, which are widespread among orthodox Shia (Ismailis, for their part, have even forbidden them). The 10th of Muharram, which marks the day Imam Hussein, the Prophet's grandson, was tortured by Caliph Umayyad Yazid (*achoura*) in 680, is a day of fasting, prayers and sermons, followed by a community dinner. A typical dish: *khichra*⁴ is served. To prolong the remembrance of the bereavement, young people are not allowed to marry over a period of 40 days after the 10th day of Muharram.

Bohra worship is almost similar in detail to that of other Muslims. Men and women pray separately at the mosque three times a day (instead of the Sunnis' five times). During prayer, the men don a special

(4) Boiled and pounded cereals eaten with mutton.

dress (*langi*). All faithful are, in principle, encouraged to follow what is prescribed for Ramadan and go on pilgrimage to Mecca. However these two commandments are not strictly observed. On the other hand, the visit to tombs of former *dais* (*dargah*) tends, like among Ismailis, to replace pilgrimage. Condemned in the Koran, such worship of people (*shirk*) is also considered “idolatry” (*kufr*) both by Sunnis and the reformist Bohra minority. It will also be noted that as heretical as it is, the marking of the death of nearly deified saints, very distinctly stands out both from that of the Hindus and Sunni Muslims, recalling the treatment of the dead that is unique to Bohras alone (Engineer 1980: 163). Indeed, the latter pay special attention to the preparation of the dead, who undergo particular rituals, before being taken to the mosque mortuaries (every deceased is accompanied by a sort of missive, signed by the Dai’s representative entreating Allah to receive it in paradise).

As far as moral behaviour is concerned, Bohras are bound to strictly follow the *shar’ia*, and they are a testimony to superior rigour in the practice of its teachings compared to Ismailis. They do not consume tobacco or alcohol, and forbid licentious spectacles, gambling, as well as interest on loans. Although they are less concerned about Proselytising, they urge their followers to show solidarity and to give alms, but they condemn ostentatious spending, thus underlining the analogy, already done by other authors, with some puritan Protestant groups.

The religion – or even just some aspects of it – notwithstanding the fact that like all Indian Muslims, Bohras are a section of Hindu converts, explains why a large number of their symbolic references, customs and rituals are typically Indian, and even often Vedic. A leading example frequently and generally cited among the Ismailis (including Khojas) is that of wedding rituals (*shadi* rituals). However, to underline the contractual nature of the union, consent of the spouses is sought, like among the Khoja Ismailis, by a *cadi* (Muslim magistrate). Matrimonial gifts are generally simple gifts (*mahr*: paraphernalia given to a wife by her husband). Wherever practiced, dowry (*hunda*), which is not recognized by Islam but is still widespread among the Hindu despite being banned in India, is minimal.

Social and family structure also maintains traces of the Hindu model. Even though castes are not officially sanctioned, since this arrangement is quite contrary to Muslim principles, internal family memory still maintains old rank distinctions between lineages (*khandan*), which approximately correspond to the hierarchy of the professions practiced today, as will be described further on. Besides, it should be recognized

that this hierarchy is insignificant, since this special trait is probably a result of the fact that Bohras are mostly from castes of traders, which is common to all Ismailis.

All Bohra families are not different in their most widespread traits (patriarchal authority, unity, cohabitation of married brothers etc.) from northern Indian families, whatever their religion. On the other hand, as far as matrimonial union is concerned – without being a strict norm – Bohras readily practice parallel cousin marriage (ego marriage with one's parallel patri-lateral cousin), which is encouraged among all Muslim but contrary to all Hindu marriage principles. In 1984, Shibany Roy indicated that among Bohras from India close to 40% of marriages were between first cousins (Roy 1984: 163).

Other cultural references are mixed. This is the case with the calendar or the language of liturgy. Bohras follow a lunar calendar prepared in Egypt by astronomers under Fatimid rule and used by their imams. This calendar (*misri*), which is two days ahead of the Sunni calendar, depends on a lunar cycle of 29.5 days, matched with compensation effected in the form of leap years. However, most Bohras observe and sometimes celebrate major Hindu fetes, particularly Diwali, a major Hindu religious fete (celebrating Rama's victory) and the day of collective blessing from the Dai (*bismillah*)⁵. Just like Hindus, they make a big deal of astrological predictions, especially under the circumstances of marriage.

Bohras adopted *lisan al-da wab* as a language of liturgy. It is a syncretised idiom with Gujarati syntax but its transcription is in Arabic writing and it has borrowed from Arabic a large part of its lexicon. In addition, and contrary to practices shared by all Muslims, Bohras generally write and read Latin transcription of texts written in Arabic. Other religious texts of less importance (religious history, the Dai sermons in Gujarati) can be translated into English.

As with the Ismailis, a recent change supported by the Dai motivates families to abandon old Hindu references to adopt customs that are common to all Muslims. Thus, in terms of inheritance, the rule in Islam (which favours women who are entitled to half the share men are entitled to) now tends to be the norm (Blank 2001: 116). In other areas that are more externally visible, the return to Islamic traditions is also significant. After rejecting minarets like the Ismailis, Bohras are now returning to traditional standards in religious architecture and are

(5) Just like in the Hindu community, Bohra businessmen begin their new financial year with *Diwali* celebrations. The Dai or his representative, *Amil*, are sought to write blessings (*bismillah*) on new financial records in exchange for a certain sum of money (*salaam*).

trying to imitate Fatimid styles, which many Shia consider canonical (they also funded the renovation of the Fatimid mosque in Cairo). In their capital, Surat (India), Bohras maintain a *medrasa* (Al Jamaat us Saifiyah), which they consider the only authentic heir of the first Al Azhar University founded in Cairo by the Fatimids.

Having installed a woman Dai in the 12th century (even though this was short-lived), the Bohra advocate for relative gender equality, a position in principle that they timidly admit in social life but hardly respect in religious life since women only have limited access to mosques, for example. Irrespective of women-friendly measures – especially in education and professional activity, as we will see a little farther – there are also very conservative social practices among the Bohra, which are even more prominent today due to external pressure from Islamic teaching. There is no compensation for the subjugation to the Dai's decisions without recourse to appeal, unlike among the Ismailis where the community is involved in the circles of power. Any faithful who openly opposes the Dai is immediately excommunicated, meaning he/she has to be an outcast, banned from marriage or getting buried by the community. The patriarchal authority always that exists within families does not seem to be under threat from the relatively higher status of women. In a number of traditional families, widows remain indoors for several months following the death of their husbands (*iddat*). Unknown to most Arabs and Indians, and probably inherited during the many years of stay in regions where this custom is accepted (Egypt, Horn of Africa), clitoridectomy (*khafd*) is still practiced in some community clinics, although it has been strongly fought by the reformist section and increasingly by the young women of the new generation. Moreover, the symbolic covering of women has in the last few years attained new levels that have gone unnoticed by contemporary observers. The *sari*, which was worn in the past by all Indian women irrespective of religion, was condemned about fifteen years ago by the current Dai citing new requirements of feminine modesty. It was replaced by a long-sleeve tunic (*kamiz*), with a hood above it that flows onto the shoulders and closely covers the face (*rhida*, popularly known as *bui bui*), just like the Islamic veil. In addition, the colours of feminine clothes, and this also applies to girls, are now confined to drab shades. For their part, men are compelled to sport a beard and the Islamic cap (which replaces the big turban in the shape of an onion which was popular until the end of the 19th century).

Administrative and political organisation

Like the Khoja Ismailis, albeit to a less degree of organization, Bohras are part of some sort of a scattered territory-less nation, but united by a strong sense of identity. For example, a Bohra who wishes to leave his/her country of residence is encouraged to carry a kind of community passport (*safai chitthi*) issued by the local Dai administration and meant to ensure s/he is received by representatives of other communities. One previously saw that contrary to Ismailis, Bohras do not pledge allegiance to an imam in office, but to a substitute, who is actually vested with the powers of the imam. Given by the title of *Mutlaq* ("his holiness"), the Dai has both religious and temporal power. Just like the Aga Khan, the powerful Ismaili monarch, his power cannot be shared nor contested. Hallowed with supernatural virtues, the Dai is reputed to be infallible, a characteristic that is common among old Sufi masters (Blank 2001: 159)⁶. Surrounded by various assessors (*Mazoon*, *Mukazir*, *Mullah*, *Sheikh*), he picks his successor before his death, quite often from among his sons or other members of his immediate family.

The administrative structure of the community government is close to that of the Ismailis. Scattered in about twenty countries, the Bohra people are part of close to 300 congregations or *anjuman* (215 in India, 75 in the rest of the world). Heading each one of them is the *amil*, the Dai's religious representative and president of the community assemblies. In office for three years, the *amil* leads religious ceremonies: first haircut for young children (*aqiqas*)⁷, weddings (*nikah*), burial rites, etc. Through the Taisirum Nikah Comity (community organ charged with the matrimonial affairs), he regularly holds meetings of young men and girls to facilitate "matched" marriages.

In every Indian province and in each of the diaspora countries (or group of countries), the Dai also appoints a "civil" administrator known as *amin*⁸. The *amin* is charged with collecting community taxes, delivering justice, managing educational institutions and settling day-to-day matters.

For their part, the faithful elect in each of the religious constituencies, a primary council known as *jamaat* (Al Dai, 2001: 97). Subjected to

(6) Previously a simple "regent" of the imam (*kal māsūm*), the 51st Dai declared himself to have the same spiritual status as full imams, meaning infallible (*māsūm*).

(7) *Aqiqā* is a ceremony practiced in every home on newborns on the 7th, 14th and 21st day after birth. The baby's hair is shaved by the *amil* and a goat is sacrificed.

(8) In East Africa, this responsibility is currently bestowed upon Sheikh Hussein A. Hebatullah.

community tax, they make several contributions to the Dai every year. The legal alms (*zakat*) add up in theory to 2.5% of one's income. A fraction of this goes to the collector. Another fraction is distributed locally to the poor. *Khamzi* (the "fifth") is meant for funding the common expenditure. It also goes to an emergency fund meant to assist communities in difficult circumstances (expulsion, expropriations, etc.). In reality, due to lack of controls, the faithful who adhere to the "fiscal ratios" required by tradition are quite few.

List of Bohra taxes:

- *Zakat*: 2.5% of one's entire income (general budget)
- *Sila*: voluntary contribution (general budget)
- *Fitra*: for the poor, levied during the month of Ramadan
- *Nazar Muqam*: levied for the *mazun*
- *Haqqun-Nass*: for the salvation of souls during funerals (levied on the deceased's family)
- *Khamzi ou Khums* ("fifth" of the income): sort of tax on profits levied on industrial and commercial businesses
- *Salam*: personal offerings to the Dai

In some respects, voluntary contributions (*Fitra*, *Haqqun-Nass*, *Salaam*) are show off expenses by the richest faithful, which are comparable to those of a *potlatch* when it is done to show the donors' social prestige within the community (between €500 and 50,000 per person per year, with some of the 25 richest families in East Africa making record contributions of several hundreds of thousands of euros). The most generous taxpayers are given titles (*mullah*) and are entitled to wear the turban (*pagri*). Like among the Khoja Ismailis, the opaque system of community fund management and lack of any controls have led to a lot of suspicion and elicited sharp criticism from the dissenting minority, as we will see a little farther. Without ever responding to these accusations, the Dai administration prides itself in numerous philanthropic activities, which include the rehabilitation of historic monuments at the centre of Ismailis history in Syria, Egypt, Yemen, Pakistan and India.

However, in contrast with the Aga Khan, who presents a figure that is deep in Western ways, lives in Europe distant from most faithful, the Dai lives in India (in Surat, near Bombay), leads a very traditional life and is close to his followers. The sway the Dai has over the daily life of individuals is a remarkable characteristic of the Bohra – and is much more prominent than among the Khoja – which leads the outside observer to believe that the collective existence of the community

(which is truly a tiny population) is permanently under the watch of some sort of family government.

From childhood (between 14 and 15 years), all faithful, young boys and girls, are bound to fulfil the *mithaq* ritual - oath of fidelity to the Dai, which thereafter is renewed every year on the 18th day of the Islamic Zil-al-Hadj month⁹. No major decision, like choosing the name of children, a spouse or business/financial investments, may be taken without his formal consent through his regional delegate, *amil*). In Kenya, which the current Dai (Syedna Muhammed Burhanuddin, 52nd in the history of the religious community) visits quite regularly, it is common to find traditional families delaying wedding ceremonies to await his advent¹⁰. For about ten years now, there has been a card system that makes it possible to assess the degree of the Dai's satisfaction with followers: green card for loyalists, yellow card for individuals on probation and red card for those facing excommunication.

Bohras in East Africa

Bohras spread to East Africa from the beginning of the 19th century. They first settled in Zanzibar, then along the Kenyan coast in Mombasa and Lamu. After Ismailis and Hindus, Bohras were among the three major Indian communities that settled in Zanzibar in the 19th century. According to Salvadori (1983: 257), there were in 1874 Bohra traders in Lamu who specialized in exporting the mangrove bark to India and selling packaging material in Zanzibar for transporting spices (some of these families, currently settled in Mombasa, have kept the nickname Lamuwallah). In 1887, a census established the Bohra population along the East African coast at 1340 and in Mombasa at 228 (Patel: 1997: 9). After the construction of the Mombasa-Kampala railway, and following the example of Patel Hindus, Bohras set up businesses (*duka*) in the Kenyan highlands (Salvadori, 1983: 219). Initially traders in all kinds of goods (both retail and wholesale), Bohras acquired subsequently a specialty in hardware, glassware and sanitary equipment business before some of them got into the construction business, then into real estate development. The Dai representative in East Africa, Sheikh Hussein

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- (9) The new version of this oath notably stipulates: "Whatever his orders, you will obey the Dai or risk being a sinner (*haram*). You will never be hostile to the Dai. You will never complain. You will unconditionally support him and never tempt to deceive him" (Engineer 1980: 159).
- (10) The Dai, who was enthroned in 1966, is 98 years old (2011).

Hebatullah, today owns the largest sanitary equipment and glassware import business in Kenya.

Resettled over the last few years in the three East African countries (since their expulsion from Zanzibar in 1963 and Uganda in 1972), Bohras number remains low in Uganda (a few hundred). In Tanzania and Kenya, their population probably exceeds 10,000, with only the figures in Kenya having been statistically assessed (6,800 in 2001, and about 6,500 in 2005). Bohras in Kenya are mostly based in Nairobi (2,500 people) and Mombasa (1,500 people), but are also present in provincial towns (Malindi, Nakuru, Kisumu, Eldoret, Nyeri, etc.).

The Bohra economic structure is original, though they have similarities with the Khoja Ismailis, as we have seen. Through their financial foundations (credit bodies), Bohras have first and foremost a cooperative investment system that assures business apprentices guarantee of the community structure. Subject to consideration of business plans and various forms of family guarantees (financial and moral), these trusts grant short and medium term interest-free loans to investor applicants¹¹. Loans for consumption are prohibited, unless they are for children's education and wedding plans. All loans attract no interest (the interest is actually not obligatory, with the accepted practice being a thanksgiving gift by the borrower on the repayment day)¹².

The second socio-professional characteristic of the Bohra is their eagerness to modernize, in spite of their reputation for social and religious conservatism. Dedicating a large part of family and community revenue to education, Bohras are very keen on modern techniques, love automatic tools and electronics (many Bohra hardware merchants specialize selling this type of equipment). The Bohra were among the first businessmen in East Africa to acquire computers. The women are not new to the move towards modernity as Bohras insist on equal access to the education for girls, and particularly ensure they are encouraged to pursue technical professions (data processing, engineering, medicine).

However, the economic muscle of the Bohra community cannot be compared to that of the Ismailis. Since they are not in banking, insurance, tourism, or processing industries and are few in the liberal professions (apart from the active group of famous lawyers from the reformed section), Bohras tend to occupy mid-level positions, in conformity, one

(11) Qarda Hasana Trust set up in 1980.

(12) Since interest loans (*riba*) were formally prohibited by the Dai in 1980, the size of this gift has no fixed rate but it is nevertheless proportional to the loan size of the loan, and it is therefore, in reality disguised interest, although generally lower.

might say, with their moral rigour and cooperative economic structure. Though prohibiting interest on loans helps promote small businesses within the community, it impedes largescale economic plans by keeping Bohras away from large financial sectors and prospects of international investment¹³.

*Alibhai M. Jeevanjee, one of the figures from the Indian community during the colonial era, was a Bohra from Karachi. An entrepreneur in construction, he helped build several mosques, constructed many buildings in Nairobi (including the first stone house) and set up in the heart of the city the public garden that today bears his name. Founder in 1901 of the Mombasa African Standard, the oldest daily in Kenya (precursor of Nairobi's East African Standard), he was the first Indian to sit in the colonial Legislative Council. In 1914, he co-founded the East African Indian National Congress (EAINC), the first Indian political organization. Alibhai M. Jeevanjee's reputation also comes from his philanthropic activity (schools, sports fields, clinics, religious buildings etc.).*¹⁴

Bohra administration in Kenya

In 2001, the Dai administration in Kenya had nine congregations (*jamaat*), which, distributed in the main country's districts, had 6,800 people in total, with 2,500 of them in Nairobi and 3,000 in Mombasa, – while some of the families lived in the smaller towns; Lamu, Malindi, Kisumu, Nakuru, Kitui, Mariakani and Eldoret (Al Dai, 2001: 97).

According to community leaders, about 50% of the community resources are allocated to congregations, for the maintenance of religious and school buildings, for example. How the rest of the money is used is more or less impossible to establish, since the amount left in the coffers of the central administration (including the Dai's personal expenses and that of his entourage) cannot, as we mentioned earlier, be subjected to any checks. It is true that the Dai owns and manages several foundations dedicated to diverse causes in East Africa (health assistance to the destitute, funding the community's education system and cooperative loans). Apart from handouts to poor families and victims of natural disasters, the foundations do not ensure services are rendered free of charge. Thus school fees and hospital expenses generally remain

(13) In 1990, citing the prohibition of interest payments, the Dai commanded all Bohras with paid accounts in Bombay's Mercantile Cooperative Bank to end their investment funds. This decision elicited protest from the reformist minority.

(14) See Patel (1997).

household responsibility. Similarly, the smallest entrepreneurs only get interest-free loans from credit bodies.

Table 6.2

	Place	Area of activity
Burhani Foundation		Charity
Saifee Foundation		Health
His Holiness Dr Syedna Taher Saifuddin Memorial Foundation		Education
Burhaniya Bohra Education Society		Education
AlMadrassa-tus-Saifiyah Burhanuddin	Mombasa	Education
Faiz-e-Hussaini Trust		Credit
Burhani Qardan Hasana Trust	Nairobi	Credit
Mohamedi Qardan Hasana Trust		Credit
Taheri Qardan Hasana Trust		Credit
	Nairobi	
	Mombasa	
	Nairobi	

As we will see a little farther, the autocratic nature of the Dai administration in East Africa has elicited many commentaries and maintained discontent among the secessionist minority, as illustrated recently by rampant excommunication or more precisely of banishment (*baraat*). When a *baraat* is pronounced against a member of the community, his/her family and friends are required to break all ties with him/her. The convict is not only dispossessed of his/her follower status and is banned from mosques, community and receptions, but is also banished from society; he/she no longer deserves to be greeted; all his/her business and financial transactions are nullified. The indignity of the *baraat* reverberates on the family of the affected person, whose members are discredited forthwith (Luqmani 1987: 17). Interpreted in comparison with the Hindu caste system, an excommunicated Bohra becomes an “untouchable” (Nathwani Commission, 1979).

Social life

The Bohra are a very close-knit community. Their social life is centred on religious activities, education of their children and the other sociable activities (women’s associations, sports clubs, etc.).

In the three East African countries, more so in Kenya, Bohras come together in community districts, as it is generally the case for most members of the Indian diaspora. In the city of Mombasa, they occupy an urban islet known as Bohra Shamba. In Nairobi, the majority of Bohras live in the Saifee Park complex constructed in 1984-1985. Situated in the Langata district, southwest of the city, this residential unit is complete with a mosque, a clinic as well as a high school. Settlement in this part of the city is in keeping with an older settlement close to the central administrative and business district.

Bohras have some of the most beautiful mosques in Kenya. The oldest used to be in Mombasa. Constructed by Alibhai M. Jeevanjee in the beginning of the previous century, it was demolished in 1983 by Dai Taher Saifuddin under the pretext that the *qibla*¹⁵ was not well placed¹⁶. Nairobi's first Bohra mosque, built in the initial years of urban settlement (1912), was in the city centre, near the old business district. The most recent one is located inside the Saifee Park in the Langata district. Whereas entry by strangers into Bohra mosques used to be tolerated in the past – especially during weddings – it is today strictly reserved to adherents of the faith, another sign of a religious hard-line trend already mentioned elsewhere.

Keen to ensure the best possible level of education in a pedagogical framework that maintains community culture and guarantees respect for their beliefs, Bohras devote large amounts of resources to educating their children. As mentioned previously, girls are not excluded of these programs, with similar efforts being devoted to their education at all levels. Due to a lack of sufficient means, the Bohra community in Kenya has only two schools in the country: one in Nairobi and the other in Mombasa. Located inside Nairobi's Saifee Park, the private high school *Al Madrasa Tus Saifyatul Burhaniyah* had 258 pupils and 16 teachers in 2007¹⁷.

Pursuing studies abroad (Surat, Karachi, Canada, Malaysia) is often too costly for most of the middle class families.

(15) Apse placed facing Mecca

(16) "An act of vengeance by the clergy against one of the most active reformists" according to Zarina Patel, A.M. Jeevanjee's granddaughter (2007).

(17) Most pupils in the school are boarders or live within the residential complex. Bohra schools follow the Kenyan curriculum, but incorporate religious education directives which are given by the Bohra central administration in Bombay. The classes are mixed, however boys and girls sit in separate rows. Three languages are taught: English, Arabic and Swahili. The pupils are also taught data processing and sporting activities, in accordance with the Anglo-Saxon education model widely offered in Kenya. In 2005, five pupils from this high school were admitted to the University of Nairobi.

In all Bohra families, every child, boy or girl, regardless of his/her education is expected to receive several years of religious education. Conducted in the Bohra language of liturgy (*lisan ud dawat*), this education ends in adolescence with an oath of allegiance to the Dai (*mithaq*). Young people who complete their education are awarded the title of *mumineen* ("believers"). Each of them is then provided with a Bohra identity card containing personal information (marriages and deaths) that is sent to Bombay by administrators of every congregation. Any faithful without this card cannot on any account participate in the community's religious life (Blank, 2001: 180).

Brief history of Bohra dissent

Like most religious movements, Bohras have been affected in the course of their history by numerous cases of internal dissent. One of the most significant cases dates back to 1836 in India when some scholars (*ulemas*), basing their dissent on Islamic customary teaching, challenged the hereditary nature of the responsibility of the Dai. The same challenge recurred and worsened in the beginning of the 20th century (1910) when a group of liberals accused the Dai of rejecting the establishment of a secondary school in Bombay that would apply methods and offer curricular from the West (particularly in the teaching of English). Excommunicated in India after instituting a law suit against the Dai, the dissident group found some adherents in Kenya, particularly in Alibhai M. Jeevanjee, whom we have already mentioned¹⁸.

Numbering about 10,000 people in the world and 100 in Kenya (70 in Nairobi and 30 in Mombasa) the reformists have consistently refused to breakaway and persistently fought the "secessionist" tag. Without questioning the principle of "monarchy" in the structure, they criticize the autocratic nature of the powers invested in the Dai, denounce his extravagant lifestyle and demand the right to free debate. Coming from intellectual backgrounds generally (particularly liberal professions), they have a democratic structure themselves that links them with other liberal groups of the Indian diaspora.

(18) The issue of modernizing education was worsened years later by fresh accusations of embezzlement of funds. In 1917, Dai Taher Saifuddin (Mohamed Badruddin's successor opposed to the modern school of thought) was accused personally of spending for his personal use the contents of a mausoleum collection box intended for helping the poor. During the hearing of the lawsuit against him brought before the court of Bombay, the Dai refused to disclose his accounts. Following the hearing, which did not have a follow-up, the dissenting voices were excommunicated and declared *mudai* ("outcasts"; Patel 1997: 205).

In 1955, three members of the reformist minority in Kenya proposed that members of every congregation elect a management committee that would be bound to release financial reports every year. After approval by Dai Taher Saiffudin during his visit to Kenya in 1963, this proposal was then disowned by the administration of the current Dai. The progressive group was barred from entering mosques, a move that elicited bitter protests, especially during funeral ceremonies (Taibebji 1986: 7; Hassanali 1993).

Since then, relations between community leaders and reformists have continued to deteriorate in India and the rest of the world, particularly in East Africa: protests by reformists over the Dai's local leadership appointee in Nairobi (1967); forceful expulsion of reformists from community premises in Nairobi (1968)¹⁹; various reprisals against followers having friendly or family ties with the reformists (1968, 1975 and 1998)²⁰.

Facing isolation, the reformists attempted to regroup. After creating an international federation (*World Progressive Dawoodi Bohra Conference*), they held several meetings bringing together hundreds of participants (Britain in 1986 and Canada in 1995 and 2001). In order to facilitate the continuation of their endogamic practices, an international marriage bureau was established. In Kenya, the reformists opened a communing centre (Sir Yusuf Ali Club) where usual ceremonies are held (*muharram*, weddings, funerals). Two charitable organizations have been set up to complement this structure²¹.

(19) Following this expulsion, the reformists filed a lawsuit in the local community administration before the Kenyan courts. They won the case but the ruling was overturned following an appeal in 1975.

(20) Twice in Mombasa in 1975 and 1998, relatives were threatened with excommunication or actually excommunicated for participating in the funeral of their family members identified with the reformist minority. More incidents of confrontation worth mentioning are: court action by the reformists against the local leaders in Uganda (1971); denying reformists access to the community cemeteries in Nairobi (1978); condemnation by reformists of the patrimonial management of foundations (1917-1979-1983); reformist protests in Kenya over exorbitant community taxes and fees, clamour for decentralized management of the fiscal system (1998). "Charitable organizations meant to work for the good of the community are now being used for the sole benefit of the Dai's family. Funds belonging to these organizations, as well as the proceeds of fees levied on the faithful are invested in industry whereas as far back as 1993, 30% of members of the Bohra community in Bombay were living in slums" (Golibar, Santacruz, Jogeshwari, Dharavi). "A law unto himself. How the Syedna of the Dawoodi Bohras runs a State within a State", *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, November 13-19th, 1983: 7-13. "A Bohra must pay fees to the Dai before birth and after death. There is a fees levied on foetuses as well as on dead ancestors", "Dawood Bohra's World of Secrecy", in *The Concorde*, Mombasa, 14 August 1998.

(21) The *Nairobi Group Charitable Society* and the *Mombasa Group Charitable Society* (1993).

During the Dai's recent visit to Kenya (2001), a reconciliation attempt was set in motion, with the reformists being invited to listen to the patriarch's sermon at the big community mosque in Nairobi. About twelve people accepted the invitation but later all refused to take the oath of fidelity (*mithaq*) as required of them.

Conclusion

In spite of its unchecked, inquisitive and authoritarian nature, the Bohra religious administration has proved the efficiency of its economic and social work, perhaps explaining thereby why progressive opposition has failed to succeed against a globally prosperous community that has managed to adapt in conformity with the modern world, maintain its religious identity and keep its traditions. Even though they have succeeded quite well in settling in their various host countries (particularly Kenya and Tanzania), the Bohra have not been spared political difficulties, either for having brushed aside accusations over cosmopolitanism or on the contrary due to local political involvement. This is why in 1969 (an example of the former accusation), the Dai, who was then visiting Tanzania, was expelled from the country by President Nyerere for having transferred to India proceeds of taxes paid by the faithful (Sanchawala, n.d.)²². In Kenya, on the other hand, Bohras have been accused of funding the election campaign through a foundation whose chairman was a Gikuyu politician²³.

The future of Bohras, like that of other Indian communities, is uncertain in East Africa. Hardly attracted to Western countries (unlike Ismailis, for example, many of whom are known to have recently emigrated to Canada), Bohras have time and again affirmed their attachment to Africa, the continent in which most of them have roots for at least the early 20th century. The prospects of their continued stay in African countries depend on several factors over which they do not have total control: success in their professional activities, security of their businesses, understanding between them and Africans, particularly African Muslims, who are not always inclined towards them.

(22) Although this transfer was in total conformity with the para-fiscal rules of the Bohra community, it was then considered "illegal expatriation of foreign currency". The rumour has it that despite his advanced age, the Dai visits Tanzania every year to hunt lions.

(23) Charles Njonjo, a very well-known Gikuyu political leader in Kenya became chairman of the Burhani foundation (charged with distributing financial aid to families in difficulty). Charles Njonjo, who was appointed a trustee for life and a signatory to foundation accounts, was accused of using part of the community funds to finance elections.

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Merchants and Industrialists of Indo-Pakistani Origin in Kenya: A Sociological Overview

Gidraph G. WAIRIRE

It is well known that in addition to the Indian population that was already long established along the East Africa coasts, a wave of immigrants from Northern India was attracted by business opportunities in Kenya due to the presence of contract workers involved in the construction of the railway line from Mombasa to Uganda in the beginning of the twentieth century. Thus, in the beginning, traders, artisans, independent workers and newcomers turned to a clientele of Indian workers in Kenya who were paid well enough to buy goods and services that they could not afford in India as soon as they arrived in Africa.

While this second wave of expatriates gradually expanded its clientele to Africans and Europeans, other immigrants from the Indian subcontinent were also recruited by the British for the needs of the colonial administration. In between the two World Wars, there was a quick rise of the population of Indian origin whose living standards gradually rose to a level intermediate between the settlers and the colonized. The Indians' economic promotion was also accompanied by an intermediary status, through the discriminatory system of apartheid established by the colonial authorities. Several reasons explain the upward mobility that characterized Asian Kenyans social history (Khan 1993). Since they arrived in Africa without their families, many immigrants

were in excellent positions to save money. Moreover, the Indians were from societies that were already at least partially urbanized and more literate, having been exposed to technical, cultural and linguistic ties with Europeans for a long time. Due to this reason, Europeans believed that Indians were intellectually superior to Africans. Consequently, the majority of middle income jobs in Kenya such as supervisors, technicians and clerks were reserved for Indians, thus giving them an advantage over native populations.

The participation of the Indian diaspora in the industrial and commercial life in Kenya today covers a wide range of companies whose size turnover vary in large proportions, from sole proprietorship to limited liability companies with several branches and subsidiaries. From a statistical point of view, the majority of entrepreneurs of Indian origin are in charge of retail or wholesale trade, such as grocery stores, clothing stores, hardware stores, motor vehicle spare parts and even in higher categories like supermarkets (Nakumatt). Another category where Indians are involved is service activities and liberal professions like pharmacy, medicine, law, architecture, etc. Large firms are mainly industrial in nature (metallurgy and mechanical engineering, building materials, food industry) as well as insurance, banking and tourism. Hardware stores, general trading, clothing stores and car spare parts are among the small and medium-sized businesses that are prevalent among communities of Indian origin. Indeed, products sold by these trades constitute daily shopping for the majority of consumers. Qualities offered by communities of Indian origin in management of business like patience, tact, variety of products make their businesses more successful than those of their African competitors.

An overview of the share taken by Asian Kenyans in Kenya's industrial activities

The processing industry in Kenya represents over 20% of GDP. It employs over 300,000 people in the formal sector and 3.7 million people in the informal sector (GOK, 2003). The processing industry is largely dominated by people of Indian or Pakistani origin. Some entrepreneurs of Indian origin are largely subcontractors or shareholders of multinational corporations. Primarily suppliers to the domestic market¹, industries

(1) Domestic market basically means the market of the three East African countries (Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania) and secondly the COMESA market (*Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa*), created in 1994 and bringing together 20 countries.

owned by members of the Indian diaspora are essentially oriented towards production of items needed by the majority of consumers' daily lives. Domestic food and beverage production are thus predominant. In 2003, it accounted for over a third (34%) of industrial employment while in 2004, it accounted for 70% of the total industrial production turnover (and incidentally 18% of the exports). Other important industries are construction and civil engineering, chemicals and pharmaceuticals, leather industry, metallurgical industry, paper and cardboard industries, textile industry, plastic manufacturing, timber and wood industries (KAM 2006 and 2007).

Main locations of industrial and commercial activities

As mentioned earlier on, almost all industrial enterprises established in Kenya are in towns and suburban areas. In Nairobi, for example, most manufacturing and wholesale businesses are found in the industrial area and the Central Business District. Unlike this type of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), many small businesses owned by people of Indian origin are scattered all over the country from early colonial times, namely in small towns and even in rural towns. It is therefore difficult to come up with an inventory and specify their locations. Despite strong competition from Africans, many of these small businesses have survived, some of them seizing on new opportunities in technical and technology areas (ICT, computers, office, telephony, *hi-fi* equipment), while others maintained – as we shall see later – old specializations dating back to the colonial period (hardware, tinware, glassware supply, car accessories, agricultural equipment, etc.). Thus, in the dusty suburb Mwiki, near Nairobi, or (even) in the vicinity of Kiambu, one can still find Indo-African shops specialized in poultry, veterinary or animal food sales. Located on the busy Nairobi-Mombasa highway, small areas of Sultan Hamud, Emali and Makindu are also well known for their high concentration of hardware stores, and general stores, all owned by representatives of the Indian diaspora.

In 2006, the *Kenya Association of Manufacturers* (KAM) categorised manufacturing industries in Kenya in 12 main production fields. Some of the main firms owned by Kenyan Asians are mentioned in the table below. The government is not a shareholder in most of these industries.

Table 7.1 Main industrial firms controlled by representatives of Kenyan Asian minorities

Field	Main indo-Kenyan firms
Food and drinks	Bidco Oil Co. Ltd (cooking fat); United Millers Ltd (flour-milling); Bogani Industries; Broadway Bakery (bakers); Deepa Industries Ltd; House of Manji (biscuit making); Miwani Sugar Company (sugar cane); Swan Industries Ltd; Jambo Biscuits Ltd; Kenafric Industries; Kensalt Ltd (salt); Tech Pak Industries Ltd; Kapa Oil Refineries.
Building, construction, glass and mining sector	Athi River Mining; Central Glass Industries; Karsan Murji & Co. Ltd; Saj Ceramics Ltd; Kenya Builders & Concrete Ltd; Kalu Works Ltd.
Chemicals and related activities	Basco Products; Diamond Industries; Osho Chemical Ltd; Rayat Trading Co. Ltd; Vitafoam Products Ltd; Twiga Chemical Industries; E.A. Heavy Chemicals Ltd (1999); Sadolin Paints (E.A.) Ltd (paints); Galaxy Paints & Coating CO. Ltd; Kapi Ltd.
Energy, electric and electronic production	Triton Petroleum CO. Ltd; Baumann Engineering Ltd; Everyday Batteries Kenya Ltd (batteries); Optimum Lubricants Ltd (lubricants); Sollatek Electronics (Kenya) Ltd; Manufacturers & Suppliers (K) Ltd; Doshi & Co (Electrical) Ltd; Tsavo Power.
Shoes and leather commodities	Alpharama Ltd; Leather Industries of Kenya Ltd; New Market Leather Factory Ltd.
Metal	Steel Structures Ltd; Kenya Aluminium Industrial Works Ltd; Alloy Steel Casting Ltd (alloy steel); Devski Steel Mills Ltd ; Doshi Enterprises Ltd; Corrugated Sheets Ltd (corrugated iron sheets); Sandvik Kenya Ltd; Khetshi Dharamshi & Co Ltd; Shamco Industries Ltd; Mabati Rolling Mills; Kaluworks Ltd; Viking Industries, Rollmill (K) Ltd.
Paper and packaging	Pan African Paper (E.A.) Mills Ltd; Prestige Packaging Ltd; Chandaria Industries Ltd; Transpaper Kenya Ltd; Dodhia Packaging Ltd; Kartasi Industries; Nation Media Group; Printpak Multi Packaging Ltd; Statpack Industries Ltd; Tetra Pak Ltd; D.L. Patel Press (Kenya) Ltd; Packaging Manufacturers Ltd (1976).

Field	Main indo-Kenyan firms
Motor vehicles and accessories	Marshall – Tata; Ashok-Leyland; Kamsons-Mahindra; CMC-Maruti; Bhachu Industries Ltd; Impala Glass Industries Ltd; Labh Singh Harman Singh Ltd; Theevan Enterprises; Varsani Brakelinings Ltd; Chui Auto Spring Industries Ltd; Associated Vehicle Assemblers Ltd; Auto Spring Manufacturers Ltd.
Pharmaceutical industries and medical equipment	Cadila & UB Pharmaceuticals; Alpha Medical Manufacturers Ltd; Manhar Brothers (K) Ltd; KAM Pharmacy Ltd; Medivet Products Ltd; Regal Pharmaceuticals; Dawa Ltd; Bulk Medicals Ltd.
Plastic and rubber products	Sumaria Industries; Sameer Africa Ltd; Doshi Ironmongers (Ironmongers); Cables & Plastics, Bobmil Industries; Laneeb Plastics Industries Ltd; Ombi Rubber Rollers Ltd; Packaging Industries Ltd (Packaging); Treadsetters Tyres (tyres) Ltd; Sumaria Industries; Shiv Enterprises (E) Ltd; Kingsway Tyres & Automart Ltd; Polythene Industries Ltd.
Textiles and related material	Ajit Clothing Factory Ltd; Apex Apparels (EPZ) Ltd; Ashton Apparels (EPZ); Spinners Ltd; Spin Knit Ltd; United Aryan (EPZ) Ltd; Sunflag Textile & Knitwear Mills Ltd; Premier Knitwear Ltd; Nakuru Industries Ltd; Protex Kenya (EPZ) Ltd.
Woodworks, wooden commodities and furniture	Rai Plywoods (K) Ltd; Shah Timber Mart Ltd; Timsales Ltd; Comply Industries Ltd; Nairobi Timber Project Ltd; Kenya Wood Ltd; Eldema (Kenya) Ltd.

Source: KAM 2006, for field categorization and the author's research

Presentation of the research sample

The sample for this research is made up of small and medium entrepreneurs. Most of them are based in Nairobi (87.6%): 56.2% operate in the Central Business District while 10.5% are located in the industrial area. Others Indians who are part of the sample are based in one of the commercial areas of Nairobi (Westlands and its surroundings 7.1%). 12.4% of entrepreneurs are located in other cities of Central Kenya (Thika and Nakuru). Table 2 below classifies enterprises owned by people belonging to the sample based on business specialization.

Table 7.2 Asian Kenyan firms that were sampled

Activities	Frequency	Percentage
Hardware businesses	44	21
General Business ²	41	19.5
Clothes shops	35	16.7
Motor vehicle spare parts automobiles	31	14.8
Bookshops and stationery shops	9	4.3
Pharmacy	7	3.3
Pastries- confectionery	5	2.4
Butcheries	4	1.8
Cinema, theatre	3	1.4
Packaging	3	1.4
Information and communication technology (ICT) accessories	2	1
Hairdressing salon	2	1
Industrial insurance	1	0.5
Brokerage	1	0.5
Schools and business schools	1	0.5
Real estate	1	0.5
Restaurant and hotel business	1	0.5
Internet-cybercafe services	1	0.5
Transport	1	0.5
Total	193	91.9 %
Non industrial and commercial activities ³ Liberal professions	17	8.1
Total number of listed activities	210	100

Other than big industrial and commercial companies, it is well known that most Indo-Kenyan companies employ few people (between 1 and 20 employees). Our sample is representative of this situation. The majority of firms in the sample (67%) have between 1 and 10 employees while 1.9% of them have no employee. About 16% of them have between 11 à 20 employees, 6.7% of the between 21 and 30 employees and 14%

(2) Business that responds to customers' daily needs and usually run by individual retailers, selling the same range of products sold in supermarkets (food, domestic hardware items, etc.).

of them between 30 and 60 employees. 1.0% of the firms in the sample have between 81 and 100 workers while 1.9% of these firms have more than 100 workers. Apart from the managerial staff, the employed staff is either unqualified or has very little qualification. The majority of firms that have employed more than 30 employees are found in Nairobi's industrial area.

Table 7.3 Classification of sampled firms based on number of employees

Number of employees per firm	Percentage of firms
No employee (the owner manages the business alone)	1.9%
1-10	67%
11-20	16%
21-30	6.7%
31-40	1.4%
41-50	1.4%
51-60	1.4%
61-80	-
81-100	1.0%
+ de 100	1.9%
Unavailable data	
Total	100

Source: Researcher's investigation

Origin and transfer of industrial and commercial property

Most of the industrial and commercial firms owned by the Indian diaspora are transferred from generation to generation through inheritance. The continuity of this heritage is not usually noticed from outside because during the transfer process, the firm undergoes major natural and developmental changes that at times make it unrecognizable (industry transformation, creation of branches, all kinds of modernization).

In most industrial and commercial families, sons learn initial professional rudiments that are meant to prepare them for their

(3) This category brings together competitive liberal professional employers who charge for services they offer: architectural, accounting, surveying agencies, etc.

future responsibilities. They discover business management rules by frequently accompanying their fathers to the firms’ premises: workshop or shop supervision, personnel management, customer and supplier relations, accounting, etc. In most cases today, this hands-on initiation is complemented with strong and long university training. However, the choice of a foreign country (mostly Anglo-Saxon) for studies can be sometimes problematic due to the fact that, if it improves qualification, sometimes it dissuades the child from coming back home, thus endangering the firm’s continuity. With liberalization of higher education, girls can also follow the same path as boys. However, other than in case where the family lacks a male heir to the property, or in the case of desertion, prospects of a daughter being entrusted with business management are very minimal.

As we shall see later, the possibility of inheritance by a son-in-law is an acceptable solution but rarely exclusive. In most cases, a family without a son will entrust inheritance to one or several nephews from the father’s side. In this case, the son-in-law occupies a minor position.

The patrimonial nature of industrial and commercial property does not exclude creation of new firms, be it reconstruction of an old firm or an *ex nihilo* creation by the stakeholders. According to our investigation figures, more than a third of the sample (42.1%) could be differently considered creators of their own firms while 57.9% perpetuated domestic firms (43% having inherited them from their fathers or grandfathers, 11.4% being associated to a brother or an uncle, 3.3% are managing their husband’s heritage).

Table 7.4 Origin of the firm

Origin of the firm	Percentage
Firm inherited from the father	36.5%
Firm set up by brother, uncle, etc.	11.4%
Firm set up by grand parents	6.5%
Firm set up by husband	3.3%
Firm set up by owner and another partner	3.8%
Firm set up by owner	36.4%
Firm bought	1.6%
Firm bought by community for the owner	0.5%
Total	100 %

Source : Researcher’s investigation

As far as the reasons that motivated them to be engaged in their current commercial activities, the sampled people give different reasons but a third of them (33.8%) affirm that business activity is a family tradition that has been going on for several generations. In this regard, this tradition has to be respected by all and be transferred to other generations. All responses are presented in the table below:

Table 7.5 Reasons for business choice

Responses	Frequence	Percentage of responses
Inherited/family business	72	33.8%
Lucrative nature of business and market opportunities	34	16.0%
Experience in the business	33	15.5%
Passion for the business	28	13.1%
Appropriate training	22	10.3%
Others	24	11.3%
Total number of responses	213	100%

Source : Researcher's investigation

Marriage, inheritance and business

Marriage is not only a very important social act because of its role in the perpetuation and the renewal of family ties, but also because of its impact on the organization of domestic firms. This is because the alliance created through marriage gives the two families an opportunity to strengthen business relationships and, in the absence of a male heir, the heritage is transferred to a son-in-law who is usually nominated and guided by the family. The need to ensure that the business activity and social capital remain in the hands of known people and in whom the same people have confidence, the obsessive concern to designate a successor who is capable of carrying the family torch and hand it to generations that follow explain why marriage is treated with such caution.

Arranged marriages in industrial and commercial families of Indian origin are still a common practice today and they associate the highest level of the fiancé and the fiancée's families. Nevertheless, the consent of the suitors is always requested. Future spouses are usually given enough time to know each other well before the marriage is

celebrated. A love match is not forbidden on condition that the boy and the girl belong to the same community and receive the blessings of their respective families. According to our research data, the following criteria are used in choosing a spouse: adherence to the same religious and cultural community, same social and economic status, assurance of financial stability, respectable genealogy, good understanding between the two families and (if need be), ability to run business well.

As Michel Adam explains in another chapter of this book, Asian Kenyans are still reluctant to practise marriage outside their own communities, including within the super cultural settings represented by the diaspora of Indian origin. In case such a marriage occurs, it is due to the socially liberal and modernist character of some young suitors and their family. It should also be mentioned that future spouses must have in common some sort of shared community of belonging, based, for instance, upon a shared language or social commonalities in the case they do not have the same religious background. This explains why our research data shows that a Punjabi Hindu (male or female) will possibly be able to marry a Punjabi Sikh (male or female). The same thing applies to a Gujarati Jāin and a Gujarati Hindu, a Punjabi Hindu and a Sindhi Sikh-Hindu, a Sunni Muslim and an Ithnasheri, etc. In fact, very little has changed since 1989 when Cynthia Salvadori noted that if marriages between Muslim and non Muslim Asian Kenyans are non frequent, they are rare between Asian Kenyans and European Kenyans and even rarer between Asian Kenyans and Africans (Salvadori 1989: 11). With very few exceptions, marriage in business and industrial families remains endogamous not only in terms of ethnicity, but also in terms of religion and caste. Albeit limited, this sample reveals that rules, customs and marriage rituals practised by Asian Kenyans in Kenya are far closer to those practised in India than those being practised by other communities in Kenya today.

Religion and professional activity

Other than the economic domain, another feature that is apparently common among merchants and manufacturers of Indian origin lies in the importance of their religious ties. Many of them have retained their ancestors' religion and practise it passionately. To them, conversion to another religion is very exceptional.

Table 7.6 Religious affiliation of sampled entrepreneurs

Religion	Percentage
Hindus	46%
Jāins	26.7%
Sikhs	2.4%
Muslims	24.9%
Total	100%

In the case of the diaspora of Indian origin, the relationship between commercial practice and religion – especially between professional practice and religion – is a complex issue and can be subdivided in many sub-issues:

- 1) Beliefs, requirements, prohibitions and rituals are generally used in business, either to guide the conduct or to facilitate entrepreneurial success.

First of all, there are requirements that are morally binding, especially in terms of finance. That is the case among Shia Bohra, where lending at the interest is strictly prohibited. This prohibition is accompanied by an internal credit system that is strictly controlled by the community institutions. In real sense however, it is normal for the borrowers to give “a gift of thanks” to the creditor when paying back the loan. The value of this “gift” is more or less codified and depends on the duration of the loan and can be compared to a moderate interest. On the other hand, the Ismailis do not prohibit loans with interest since they lend their fellow believers at preferential interest rates.

Secondly, celebration of ritual festivals in the premises of the company or resorting to prayers or propitiatory rituals is common both among Hindus and Muslims. While only 27% of respondents noted the existence of religious celebrations in the premises of the company, 56% of them (118 respondents) claimed to be followers of various religions as detailed in the table below. Among the most important or the most common worships are: prayers for the prosperity of the company, prayers for purification of books of accounts, prayers to keep company staff in good health.

Table 7.7 Examples of religious practices associated with business promotion

Type of ritual	Frequency	Percentage
General prayers for the firms' prosperity (all religions)	56	47.9%
Different prayers accompanied by incense (Hindus)	14	12.0%
<i>Diwali</i> prayers (Hindu new year)	10	8.5%
Reciting of Koranic verses	5	4.3%
<i>Vastu Puja</i> prayers (blessing of the building among Hindus)	5	4.3%
Prayers to <i>Mahavir</i> (Jäins)	4	3.4%
<i>Havan</i> (Vedic fire ceremony)	3	2.6%
Prayers to <i>Jalaram</i> (Hindus)	3	2.6%
Prayers to <i>Krishna</i> (Hindus)	3	2.6%
Non specified ritual during the firm's inauguration	3	2.6%
Meditating on money and business (Hindus)	2	1.8%
Prayers to <i>Swaminarayan</i> (Hindus)	2	1.7%
<i>Namaz</i> (Muslim prayer ritual)	1	0.9%
Prayers to <i>Ganesh</i> (Hindus)	1	0.9%
Prayers to <i>Lakshmi</i> , goddess of prosperity (Hindus)	1	0.9%
Prayers to <i>Mahvish</i> (Hindus)	1	0.9%
Prayers to <i>Mahvish</i> for general prosperity	1	0.9%
Strict observance of Ramadhan to facilitate success in business	1	0.9%
Temple visits before opening the business (Hindus)	1	0.9%
Total	118	100%

Source : Researcher's investigation

According to our research data, prayers and religious rituals are actually performed periodically on the sites of the activity. Some are annual (New Year's Day ceremony, etc.), others are weekly (Fridays for Muslims) or at different times of the day (for example three times per day for Muslims).

Some traders or manufacturers who were interviewed say prayers and propitiatory rituals can be practiced at any hour of the day in the company premises or even in places of worship such as temples or mosques. In fact, most commercial buildings have altars or specific places of worship like a shelf, a corner of a room or a whole room. Among Hindus and Jains, coloured pictures in beautiful frames and various statues representing deities are frequent. In some firms, a stick of incense burns constantly in front of these altars. The people concerned give different reasons for these entrepreneurial devotions: some relate them to personal beliefs while others say that they are based on collective ancient traditions. All religions stated the following objectives for entrepreneurial devotions: to bless the firm; to attract divine grace (or luck) for the day; to dispel negative incidents and chase evil spirits from the company premises; to perpetuate religious customs observed by the former owners (usually parents); to thank God for his gifts; to advocate for business development; to pray for the establishment or maintenance of justice, honesty and integrity; to increase the number of customers; to attract divine blessings; to purify business practice.

A common belief among business leaders is that religious practice and spiritual life are inseparable from the efforts expended in a purely professional domain. This provision proves the belief that success in business depends on some kind of divine intervention. In some cases, such a conviction is accompanied by a behaviour that is almost fetishist whereby the people concerned simply continue practicing their ancestors' religious customs even though they have lost their meaning.

- 2) There is a positive response regarding the link between religious affiliation and the type of business whereby, just like other populations living in Kenya, people of Indian origin are subjected to some religious norms that directly involve their professional activities. For example, it goes without saying that a devout Hindu will not engage in any butchery activity whereas a Muslim will not focus on selling of alcoholic beverages. Some liberal Muslims are however able to distinguish the process of manufacturing a product (which may be managed by non-Muslims in this case), its commercial destination (which may not be the same as the manufacturing community) and the commercial activity (under strict community control). Thus, *The Farmer's Choice*, the leading brand of industrial pork meat in Kenya – specialized among others

in the manufacture of sausages and famous bacons – is financially controlled by the Ismailia. Other examples like the leather industry – whose mere utterance is a taboo to Hindus – show that when detached from the manufacturing activity and bodily contact, it is the mere prospect of commercial gain that determines the choice of business, independent of any religious attachment⁴.

- 3) The third issue is that there are well known norms of religious origin within the community that establish a necessary link between social status and professional specialization. Hereditary caste specialization (*jati* or *gnati*) is still strongly rooted in the consciousness of Hindus as well as among some Muslims, particularly in the Sunni group. This is why there are many representatives of specialized ancient castes such as tailors (*darji*), barbers (*nayee*), tanners (*mochi*), goldsmiths (*soni*), laundry workers (*dhobi*), etc. who still own clothing stores, hair salons, shoe stores, jewellers, laundries, etc. Many other statutory categories may be added to these examples.

For several decades, however, the statutory system of division of labour is no longer rigid. First of all, certain specializations have adapted to technological changes of the modern world within the same corporation whereby (launderers have become dry cleaners; potters have become glass manufacturers; hardware dealers, building contractors, etc.). Secondly, some specializations are preserved, not as a result of any social constraint, but simply because they were acquired through succession (sons inherit their fathers' heritage etc.). Finally, because of the general rise in the level of educational, protections surrounding each of the professional bodies have weakened. All the same, if a Brahmin has never been barred from exercising any honourable profession (intellectual tasks compared to cooking and agricultural work), representatives of specialized and modest old castes can be found nowadays in almost all professions. This is the case of the Kumbhar (potters), the Suthar (carpenters), the Luhar (blacksmiths), etc. Although the proportion of these statuses of "deviants" (in reference to traditional standards) is still modest, their existence marks the beginning of a major turning point.

- 4) Fourthly, in both Kenya and India, there is one – and often several – community based specializations that are attached to a minority or religious group (Jains, Sikhs, Ismailia, etc.). These specializations are

(4) In this case, the leather industry in Kenya is largely controlled by Ismaili funds.

unknown to both the statutory division of labour and any form of religious tradition, even if occupation and religious affiliation can be matched. Since they are rooted in particular historical situations, it is generally difficult to trace the origin of these community based professional orientations. Thus, Sikhs are frequently building contractors or mechanics, Bohras are specialists in glassware trade as well as hardware and sanitary facilities, Jains are industrialists and tinware specialists while Goan Catholics are tailors or cooks, etc.

Table 7.8 Examples of statutory (castes) and communal specialisations

Hindus (<i>gnati</i>)	Usual occupation, activity	Hindus (<i>gnati</i>)	Usual occupation, activity
Lohânâ	Storekeepers	Nayee/Hajam	Hairdressers
Bathia	Sea trade	Luhar	Blacksmiths
Patel	Merchants,		
agriculturalists	Soni	Goldsmiths	
Wanza Darji	Tailors	Brahma	Liberal and intellectual professions, Business
Gurjar Sutar	Carpenters	Dhobi	Laundry workers
Mochi	Shoemakers	Jain Visa Oshwal	Trade, Business
Muslims	Usual occupation, activity	Muslims	Usual occupation, activity
Ismailia	Business, Liberal and intellectual professions	Ithnasheri	Business
Bohra	Business, Glassware trade, Health	Memon (former castes)	Trade, Business
Luhar/Wadha (old castes)	Carpenters, Mechanics, Blacksmiths	Manjoti (old castes)	Artisans
Sunni Punjabi	Employees, Civil servants	Kumbhar (old castes)	Potters

Hindus (<i>gnati</i>)	Usual occupation, activity	Hindus (<i>gnati</i>)	Usual occupation, activity
Other religious groups			
Parsi (Zoroastrien)	Engineers, Firms managers, Intellectual professions	Sikh	Entrepreneurs, Mechanics, Garage owners, Architects, Business

Source : Researcher's investigation

- 5) If community affiliation to any one group of the Indo-Pakistani diaspora is an important criterion of choice both in the firms' personnel recruitment and business relationships, religious affiliation of personnel or partners does not seem to count, except when it characterizes a particular family group which is always a privileged social space in any entrepreneurial activity. If we go by the responses of interviewed employers, existing and future business links between different firms are based on non-religious factors such as the nature of products sold, the supposed qualifications of each entrepreneur and his moral standing, the partnership costs, the amount of expected profits, etc. Some companies have clearly expansionary policies. The need to have a high turnover, combined with factors such as those mentioned above, is the source of business partnership that does not consider religious affiliations

Table 7.9 Criteria for association with potential partners

Criteria for priority choice of partners	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
Partner's professional honesty, integrity	30	26.8%
Partner's loyalty	20	17.9%
Strong family ties extending to business	18	16.1%
Common interest in business	7	6.3%
Partner's known past in the profession	7	6.3%
Partner's knowhow and technical competence	6	5.4%
Good understanding between partners	5	4.5%

Criteria for priority choice of partners	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
Keen sense of business	5	4.5%
Partner's financial strength	5	4.5%
Partner's experience	4	3.6%
Personal relation with the partner	3	2.7%
Partner's age	1	0.9%
Partner's academic qualification	1	0.9%
Total responses	112	100%

Source : Researcher's investigation

- 6) Finally, regardless of their religious affiliation, entrepreneurs of Asian origin claim to be representatives of their religion in philanthropic activities that are widespread among all merchants and industrialists in the diaspora. First, in selecting these activities, entrepreneurs of Indian origin prefer religious related initiatives even if they do not belong to the same denomination. This explains why many non-Indian social development projects (for example European or African,) have received financial support from various entrepreneurs belonging to the diaspora. In this regard, some communities mobilize their members more than others. For example, this is the case with the Ismaili who are leaders of several philanthropic foundations (especially the Aga Khan Foundation), the Lohanas, the Patels, just to mention a few.

Recruitment and allocation of duties in the firm

It was earlier mentioned that religion as such only plays a minor role in the recruitment policy of companies. According to the management circles, family membership is the most determinant policy in accordance with the patrimonial character of industrial and commercial property ownership. Recruitment for middle-level responsibilities generally favours staff of Indian origin. However, the criteria of competence usually supersedes other criteria like status or religious (community) affiliation. Though very recent and depending on community characteristics, recruitment – at the same level of qualification - is also open to competent Africans. The Ismailia are ahead of other members of the wider Indian diaspora in this field. Production and junior tasks (workers, clerks, drivers, maintenance workers or security guards)

are always assigned to African staff who are rarely in a position to get promotion in the firm⁵.

Current Kenyan labour laws encourage entrepreneurs to hire at least a portion of subordinate staff on temporary basis (fixed term or temporary contracts). This kind of hiring allows entrepreneurs to adjust labour depending on seasonal or company turnover variations. In addition, it also helps them avoid costs payable to permanent staff such as annual leave, medical cover, travel allowances, maternity leave and other benefits.

51% of the sample state that the immediate family plays a major role in the management of business while 49% of firms that have lost their family character argue that the family has no role. According to responses obtained, the families' involvement in business is at the following levels: general business management, procurement, sales and marketing, financial management, and personnel management. However, there are more frequent cases where the company management may assign some specialized tasks (technical management, accounting, advertising, etc.) to professionals who are not part of the family circle.

If the family generally has an upper hand in the management of business, its members do not play equivalent roles. This is the opinion of at least 49% of the sample, particularly taking into account the female fraction of the family. Thus, women are still often cloistered in the house to perform household chores and have nothing to do with the management of the company. However, this situation is now changing even in the most conservative families. What happens to women is also true to the youth, who are generally under the supervision of patriarchs. In fact, the company hierarchy reflects the family hierarchy, though innovations may only come from outside, particularly through the youth who are often trained in Anglo-Saxon Western institutions of higher learning.

Financing of firms

As opposed to the perception that Asian-Kenyan firms are financed by foreign capital, most of those in the sample are entirely dependent on resources from Kenya. Of the 210 entrepreneurs interviewed (a small minority of professionals are included), only 4.8% said they had benefited from foreign support. 95.2% indicate that they have no

(5) This situation is true for all big firms. On the other hand, there are small firms that only employ staff of Indian or Pakistani origin to perform all tasks. The recruits are recent illegal immigrants (rockets), who are usually paid very poorly.

foreign financial support whatsoever. Although most companies owe their existence to limited capital, many of them were able to ensure a cash flow that enabled them to be almost independent while the rest of funding was financed – like everywhere – through banks.

Of the 4.8% who reported having received funding from abroad, the majority of them received the funds from parents who were expatriates, especially in Britain, Dubai and India. Other borrowers seek loans from overseas suppliers, particularly from India. These loans are later reimbursed once the imported goods are sold in Kenya. A very small fraction of borrowers (0.5%) have financial support from partners resident in Great Britain but who are not their relatives.

As far as financing from Kenya is concerned, bank loans represent a relatively secondary source of credit. According to responses from the sample, only 33% of respondents reported that they always resort to banks for credit, 67% never seek credit from banks. The need for bank loans is based on the following requirements: 1) quick replenishment, especially in times of high demand, 2) importation of goods from abroad, and 3) expansion or upgrading of the company, 4) starting a new activity.

Regardless of bank loans, businessmen have other sources of credit that are usually informal. This is the case with certain employers associations that are mutual in nature (sector or crosscutting associations) and that are willing to help struggling entrepreneurs. In fact, some of these associations have no community character and are also able to respond to loan requests from Africans or Europeans. Approximately 32% of employers interviewed in the study indicate that they are members of such associations whose aim is moreover not limited to credit. Examples of the most famous employers' mutual associations are the *United Business Association* (UBA), the *Nairobi Central Business Association* and the *Nakuru Business Association*. Community employer associations like the *Kokni Muslim Association*, the *Surat District Association* or the *Sikh Union* have a lower impact because they only address issues of members of the concerned community⁶.

(6) Other non-communal employer associations like the well-known Kenya Association of Manufacturers, the Law Society of Kenya, the Kenya Association of Pharmaceuticals, the Kenya Association of Architects, do not give credit (Kenya Association of Manufacturers), or talk to representatives of employers of certain liberal professions (lawyers, pharmacists, architects). Industrial Promotion Service (IPS), a financial organisation controlled by the Aga Khan is not mentioned here but it comes under the banking sector.

Other resources that are absolutely informal in character exist in terms of credit. These include help from neighbouring businesses, sometimes between competitors. Regardless of certain forms of commercial cooperation (which will be described in more detail below), small commercial enterprises usually practice mutual help either for purely social reasons like theft, illness, death or to improve situations where business is failing. Suppliers (particularly when they belong to the diaspora of Indian origin) are also frequent credit lenders, particularly among small merchants.

However, obtaining credit requires that some conditions be met (reputation of honesty, good management, financial support opportunity, etc.) and it is acquired only through presentation of a minimum of guarantees (family members' financial strength, real estate collateral, repayment schedule, etc.). Although nearly 46% of the sample reported being able to get credit without any conditions, further questioning reveals that in reality, this is not the case because certain requirements such as the appropriate use of funds are always asserted.

Table 7.10 Some criteria for obtaining financial help

Criteria	Frequency	Percentage
None	95	45.7%
Honesty and loyalty in business	35	16.9%
Cordial relations with businessmen	29	13.9%
Membership in an entrepreneurs' association	14	6.7%
Family ties	5	2.4%
Friendship ties	1	0.5%
Cordial relations with suppliers	1	0.5%
Reputation of skills in running of business	1	0.5%
Others	23	9.1%
Total	210	100%

Source : Researcher's investigation

Other forms of cooperation between firms

The preceding paragraph alluded to the existence of different forms of cooperation between firms. Commercial cooperation, which is common among rival small-scale traders, is the first form of cooperation. In this case, traders from the same business sector often come together to make

a single collective order which is transported in a single container, thus reducing handling and transportation costs significantly. Secondly, it was earlier mentioned that the purpose of mutual associations is not limited to credit. Several of them, indeed, provide services to various companies, including within the same industry: promotion of activities of the business sector, lobbying to the government, as well as legal, financial and business advice in order to obtain import licenses, etc.

Sharing of information about demand fluctuation, the customer's state of mind, the costs of goods and how to obtain them (where, when and how), is another area of classical cooperation between companies. Through more or less informal networks (community association or informal links between entrepreneurs of the same field), this cooperation is often understood as a means of defending the interests of companies belonging to the Indian diaspora against other competitors, especially Africans or Europeans. Thus, through an appropriate exchange of information, it is common for Asian Kenyan firms belonging to the same network to exclusively sell new products on the Kenyan market while other firms do not. By the time these goods ultimately get into the business market run by Africans or Europeans, their demand and even their selling prices are significantly low.

Some challenges facing communities of Indian origin in Kenya

Asian Kenyan communities play a vital role in the economy of the country. This role is however often downplayed, especially by Africans. Many Africans blame Kenyan Asian bosses for enriching themselves at the expense of their employees, whether temporary or unskilled workers or even those with professional qualifications: business executives, financial analysts, accountants, engineers, etc. Moreover, these same bosses are believed to import cheap labour from India to the detriment of the Kenyan workforce. On their part, representatives of the Indian diaspora strongly feel that their properties as well as their people are insecure. From time to time, there are veiled threats of expulsion from some politicians. This feeling is compounded by the rise in crime. However, the insecurity is not only a major obstacle to investment (African and non-African), it is one of the factors that make Asian Kenyans leave the country. Though it has not been achieved, there is need for mutual trust between African Kenyans and Asian Kenyans.

A second criticism often addressed to representatives of the Indian diaspora – and to manufacturers and traders in particular – is that most

of them keep away from political engagement. The minority of those who give their support to political parties are suspected to have done so for the sole purpose of obtaining commercial or financial favours. According to Warah (2007), this relative indifference to national politics strengthens the resentment of the African opinion. However, the 2007 general elections marked the beginning of change in attitude because several communities have expressed their desire not to be kept out of political consultations. For the first time in many years, a candidate of Indian origin also presented himself for a parliamentary seat in one of Nairobi's constituencies with a large population of Asian Kenyan businessmen (Kamlesh Pattni, leader of KENDA, Westlands constituency).

Regardless of these social and political issues, Asian Kenyan industrialists and traders face other difficulties that are purely economic: difficulties in accessing raw materials, non-compliance with non-tariff barriers by members of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), competition from South Africa, China and South East Asian countries, tax evasion by certain competing importers, European Union and AGOA⁷ tariff preferences. Despite these temporary barriers to entrepreneurial development that have lasted for more than a century, it is expected that they will remain associated with the country's future.

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Appendix: The Dukawallah

Michel ADAM

Half-way between the *general store* managers that were widespread in the United States of America during the last century and the ones managing clustered, fragrant and colourful stalls of the Middle East bazaars, the *dukawallah* is another prototype in East Africa and often represents a caricature of the Indian expert in summary. The word *dukawallah* means “shopkeeper” and is composed of two words. That is *duka*, a Swahili word that means “shop”, and a hindi suffix, *wallah* that stands for “owner”, “manager”, or “specialist”. Closely following the steps of the first settler and his dependent natives, the small Indian shopkeeper originally played vis-à-vis the first the roles of steward and supplier of European commodities and vis-à-vis the second became the supplier of new products: basic industrial foodstuffs like sugar, salt, flour, oil, etc.; candies like sweets, cookies, soda; different accessories, match boxes, stoves and lighting equipment, crockery and cooking utensils, clothes, pencils and exercise books, etc. The *dukawallah's* range of commercial activities, became diversified and gradually grew to include the spectrum of contemporary domestic goods, including special items such as radios, small domestic and agricultural tools, sewing machines, etc.

Another feature of the *dukawallah* is his geographical location, that is shifting away (and arguably as far away as possible) from the usual sources of industrial food supplies. The *dukawallah's* objective is to be gradually indispensable by being closer to the consumer and availing to him what would have been otherwise inaccessible. This will allow him not to sell expensively but to adjust prices according to his

customers' means while putting into consideration the goods needed by the same customers. The *dukawallah* therefore settles in areas that are geographically or socially inaccessible to Western trade. To avoid competition from his peers, he can practice trade policies based on communal partnership. These areas are usually small towns confined in village borders and indigenous neighbourhoods that are not frequented by Europeans. Contrary to popular belief, the first *dukawallah* were mostly young unmarried employees or managers of successful businesses in the vicinity of European settlements.

Two characteristics separate the *dukawallah* from the two models that were previously discussed: the North American and Levantine models. Unlike the first model, the *dukawallah* does not only sell but also buys goods related to his trade, including wholesale buying of agricultural products meant for domestic and foreign markets. This fact explains why in the early 1930s, Indians were the main cotton buyers in Uganda (Prunier 1990: 30). Unlike the bazaar's shop, the *dukawallah* is not interested in traditional products which do not sell. However, just like some Lebanese traders in West Africa, the *dukawallah* may occasionally lend money at very high interest rates, a marginal activity condemned by most Muslims.

All the *dukawallahs* work on credit and are engaged in a chain of businesses and services that make them dependent on their close and far away suppliers upfront. According to a British observer, "The Indian importer works on credit... The order that is given to an English seller is covered by a London firm which provides a credit of three to six months. This is the time it takes for goods to travel by sea and by rail. The commodities are then sold to a wholesaler who never pays cash, but signs a three months draft. The importer gets his money by taking a bank overdraft. The wholesaler then sells to wholesale dealers who also pay through overdrafts. The latter then sell to retailers who pay bills again. Goods can pass through five or six hands before reaching the consumer, and each operation is done on credit. This mechanism is such a maze that it can constitute all sorts of financial improprieties" (Stonehouse 1960: 91, quoted by Prunier 1990: 81)⁸.

There are well known communities when it comes to the *dukawallah* profession. The most common ones are Hindu Patels whose peasant ancestry predisposes them to contacts with the general peasantry and

(8) For more information, see remarks by Godfrey Asiimwe on the *dukawallah* in Uganda in this book.

to situations of isolation in rural areas. Other communities that are well represented in this business are the Punjabi Sunni Muslims and Memons. The latter are more visible in Muslim regions, especially in coastal areas. Whereas some Ismailia or Ithnasheri engage in this type of business, the Bohra never venture in it because they think that it demeans their status. It is the same case for the Jains who are hesitant to face the risks of organic pollution and as well as any attack against life associated with selling of foodstuffs.

The *dukawallah's* shop was subjected to many descriptions in colonial literature. A little behind the store – and always hidden from public scrutiny – stands, among the Hindus, an altar housing a figure (an image or a statue) of a benevolent deity: Lakshmi, Ganesh or Krishna⁹. The shopkeeper stands still and silent behind his cash desk (which he does not entrust to any employee) and is sometimes relieved by his wife. He leaves the task of welcoming customers to his African staff. This welcome is mostly characterized by poor affability and little talking. Parsimony, small profits, hard work and almost no recreation are among the well-known features of the profession. Nevertheless, among the African customers, these traits are less known than the picture of the daunting, arrogant and inflexible shopkeeper. Such a picture is also widespread among the Europeans.

The bad image that Indians in general have, especially in the eyes of African peasants, was for a long time fuelled by the fact that the only relationship with the Indian communities was that their members were, for most of them, in a position to gain from the superior commercial status: either as buyers (for example cotton in Uganda) or as sellers (for example managers of small businesses).

Except in Tanzania, where the slightest economic development slowed the upward mobility of the Indian community, many Indians began to abandon their small businesses in the years leading to independence. These businesses were acquired by African traders (as managers or owners who were mainly Gikuyu, Luo and Baganda). This movement is now getting under way (especially in Uganda given the precedence of Indian expulsion) though it was slow in taking off and is far from success. In all corners of East Africa, from the distant countryside small towns to upmarket urban areas, there are still *dukawallahs*, some of

(9) Lakshmi, goddess of prosperity, usually associated with Ganesh; Ganesh, god of merchants and wisdom; Krishna, Vishnu's eight reincarnation and one of the most revered gods in India, especially in Gujarat.

them being the last representatives of four generations of adventurous merchants.

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Living Apart Together: Economic and Spatial Logic of Indian Communities in Nakuru (Kenya)¹

Barbara MOROVICH

Like most urban areas of Kenya, Nakuru town is home to a small population of Indian origin that is mainly engaged in commercial and industrial activities. This minority, the fourth largest in all cities of Kenya, is clustered in the town centre and lives relatively far away from the African population though it maintains close business and professional relationships with the latter. For several decades now, Asian minorities have been an important element of city life².

With a population of 256,300 inhabitants, Nakuru is the third largest city of Kenya and is located approximately 160 kilometres northwest of Nairobi. Nakuru is a dusty town in the Rift Valley (derived from *nagurro*, meaning a “dusty place” in Maasai language) and is known for its salt lake that is associated with thousands of flamingos as well as the animal park that bears its name. Given the value of this natural heritage, the residents of Nakuru are differently involved in relatively prosperous commercial activities that are nurtured and maintained through tourism, both inside and outside the park (guides, travel agencies, hotels and lodges,

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- (1) The author is grateful to all the people she interviewed in Nakuru and Nairobi as well as the French Institute for Research in Africa (IFRA) for financing the research. Special thanks go to Michel Adam and Pierre Lachaier for their advice and proofreading.
- (2) After Nairobi, Mombasa and Kisumu towns (CBS, 1994).

restaurants, handicrafts, etc.). The representatives of the Kenyan Asian are differently involved in these activities.

Nakuru town is also one of Kenya's main agricultural areas. It was formerly occupied by British settlers but is currently redistributed to African large scale farmers. There are more and more different industrial activities in the immediate neighbourhood of this municipality (flour mills, food industries, textile, mechanical, etc.). The town was established by the British settlers in the early decades of the twentieth century and marked an important step in the construction of the Mombasa – Kampala railway line. Nakuru is in fact halfway between the two cities. It currently accommodates a heterogeneous population that is largely made up of immigrants from outside the region, most of them from two opposite sides of the Rift Valley (the Kalenjin in the West and the Kikuyu in the East³).

The Asian settlers established themselves in Nakuru early in the twentieth century with the arrival of the railway and just like elsewhere in Kenya where there were various fluctuations especially after independence; they gradually increased as the town grew. In the first two years after independence (1963–1965), they were affected by significant departures, and after accommodating a section of Indian refugees from Uganda in 1972, the town once again witnessed the beginning of an exodus in 1982, following persecutions that affected many traders. Since then, the population of Asian settlers has been up and down: significant increase from 1983 to 1989 (up to 2516 people in 1989)⁴; significant decline since the departure of many residents (mainly towards Western countries) who were not offset by the recent arrival of a new wave of immigrants from India (1892 persons in 2006 according to our own census)⁵.

Throughout the colonial period, Nakuru Asians were subjected to segregation imposed by the British settlers, though they did not object to all of its consequences. Thus, in educational matters, representatives of different communities greeted with some satisfaction the principle of

(3) For the native Maasai population, the central part of the Rift Valley was their pasture and route, having been pushed further South during the initial years of the colonial period. In addition, it is well known that allocation of land previously owned by British settlers to the majority of Kikuyus was the cause of conflicts with the Kalenjins and previous Maasai occupants in recent years.

(4) Figures from the 1989 census (CBS, 1994).

(5) See the appendix. Since the last census of 1999 did not give details about ethnic belonging in the country, it is difficult to know the official figures of the present population of Asians in Kenya. For more information, see Laurent Nowik's chapter in this volume.

separate Asian schools whose languages of instruction were vernacular languages (primarily Gujarati and occasionally Punjabi, Urdu and Hindi). Another satisfactory effect of this segregation to Asians is that they were able to remain respectful to certain specific traditions (for example vegetarianism and other dietary restrictions).

Regarding residential areas, all Asian immigrants were from 1940 clustered in an area known as “58” in Section III of the residential area. Sections I (on the hilltops overlooking the city) and II (in the lower parts of the city) were respectively assigned to the Europeans (*European residential area*) and Africans (*African location*). Muslims were initially mixed with members of other religions (mainly Hindus and Sikhs) but they were later resettled in an area where there was a mosque after an intervention by the Muslim Association of Nakuru⁶. In the 1950s, concessions of plots were generally controlled by the two largest associations, namely the Muslim Association and the Indian Association⁷. Many letters testify the role of these associations at the time: pressure groups in which hierarchies are important with some families holding dominant posts. For the most recent immigrants, obtaining their protection was a major asset.

Visible geographical and physical description of the Indian position by Europeans and Africans was the symbolic translation of their intermediate position in labour division, in wealth distribution and hierarchal honours as commissioned by the colonial order. Since Asians were divided into numerous castes that were strongly hierarchical and closed and were widely believed to be a unified ethnic community, they formed a sort of caste that was between the British order and the African mass of peasants and pastoralists.

Despite total abolition of all forms of discrimination and segregation, the situation today has some similarities with that of the past. If the different communities are no longer confined in strictly segregated

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- (6) In 1950, Ibrahim Karimbux of Kenya Oatmeal Limited wrote to the District Commissioner: “The above plot is just opposite our Mosque and the feelings of the Muslim Community are that this plot should be allotted to some Muslim”, KNA PC/NKU/1/6: letter dated 17/01/50.
- (7) On 11 April 1950, the leaders of this association complained that the Indian representatives chosen by the British administration to examine their requests for plots were not trusted by the communities. One Mr. Thakker, the association’s chairman, asked the Special Commissioner and Acting Commissioner of Land to seek the Indian Association’s opinion before going ahead with the naming of their representative. The Chairman also requested that when allocating parcels of land, priority be given to families that had been in Kenya for a long time and known to the association and not newcomers. KNA, *Resident Labourers Ordinance*, Nakuru, 1945-1953, document dated 11 April 1950.

neighbourhoods like in the past, (most Europeans have also left the country), the social division of space has reinforced the relics of the old ethnic division which did not disappear completely. Thus, after acquiring several luxury residences, the richest Asians went to occupy part of the European residential areas (Milimani). Other wealthy families (albeit lower levels of wealth), invested in the housing estate called “Nakuru Blanket” along the road from Nairobi. As for the majority of families, they remained in the old residential area “58”, which is synonymous with the colonial segregation. Many of them remain attached to this place because they are used to it and it is also convenient (presence of places of worship and community meetings), not forgetting that the area is safer (collective security to their houses)⁸.

An overview of various communities: The Hindus

With nearly 1600 people (1592), Hindus at large (including Sikhs and Jains) represent 84.5% of total Asian community. This percentage is considerably higher than those of other towns in Kenya (on average: 63%; Nairobi: 69%; Mombasa: 48%)⁹. Except for Arya Samaj (a Hindu minority that is moving away from the caste system), Sikhs and Jains (incorporated in the records of the Hindu Council, but in reality at the margin of Hinduism), the Asian community is divided into about twelve communities representing the old castes (*jati* or *gnati*). These communities have maintained all characteristics of the old castes that they represent (professional specialization, endogamy, even geographic origins, etc.).

Composition of the groups affiliated to the Hindu Council of Nakuru

Statutory Hindu groups (gnati)

- Brahma Samaj (Brahmas):
- Rajput (*kshatryya*)

(8) In this residential area, there are currently about twenty community and religious centres (six Hindu temples and ten mosques): Jalaram Temple, Khrisna Temple, Shree Cutchi Gujarati Hindu Centre, Swaminarayan Temple, BAPS Temple, Arya Samaj Temple, Visha Oshwal Temple, Shree Hirjibaba, Raghuvansh Bhavan (Lohana Hall), Sikh Temple, Patel Brotherhood Hall, Ismaili Jamatkhana Mosque, Bohra Mosque, Ithnasheri Mosque, Jamia Mosque, Bondani Mosque, 58 Mosque, Ronda Mosque, Railway Mosque, Cambia Somali Mosque, Shabab Mosque.

(9) Adam (2004: 11).

- Lohana (traders)
- Patel (traders, former peasants)
- Prajapati or Kumbhar (potters)
- Vanza Community (tailors)
- Hindu dissidents or non-Hindus, strictly speaking
- Arya Samaj
- Majority Jains (Visa Oshwal Community)
- Minority Jains (Navnat Vanik Mahajan)
- Sikhs
- Umbrella regional organisations
- Cutchi Gujarati Hindu Union
- Kutchi Community
- South Indian Community

A section on Nakuru in the *Hindu Council of Kenya's* booklet lists Asian communities in alphabetical order, irrespective of caste hierarchy and differences in religion. As mentioned earlier, the Hindu Council is composed of orthodox Hindus and dissidents (Arya Samaj, Jain, etc.) as well as Sikhs. Officials of the organization have used this method of classification in order to avoid displaying differences in social status or religious primacy among Hindus. This in turn makes other people think that Asians have a very strong internal solidarity. While respecting religious differences (Hindus, Hindu dissenters, Sikhs), we chose to present these communities according to their population sizes. We have also separately classified regional umbrella religious organizations for purposes of clarity and consistency.

The Patels

The population of the Patels, also known as Patidar in Kenya is about 10,000. They are 350 in Nakuru and of all orthodox Hindu groups, they are first in terms of importance, economically if not in terms of integration into the town¹⁰. Most Patels in Nakuru are in fact relatively recent immigrants from families that settled shortly before or after the Second World War. Other families arrived after independence, and were either small shopkeepers from the bush, former construction workers¹¹ or low cadre employees coming from all over, especially after the British had fired most of the small colonial officers, among them large numbers

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- (10) The Patels formed one of the largest Hindu communities in Kenya but left the country *en masse* after independence and their populations currently continues to decline. The figure of 10,000 people mentioned here is a very approximate estimate.
- (11) Up to the 1960s, a number of Patels were masons by profession.

of Patels. Having fought hard to get a place in business between Lohanas and Jains, the Patels are mainly in retail trade. This means that they do not occupy dominant positions although they are comfortable. There are representatives of two best known groups of Patels in Nakuru, both of them originally from Gujarat. These are the minority and higher status Kaira Leva from the Kathiawar peninsula and the Cutchi Leva from Cutch. A *Patel Brotherhood Centre* comprised of a library, a reading room and a sports field opened its doors in 1931 in Nakuru. Extensions of this community centre took place in 1957 and 1972, including the construction of a temple dedicated to Krishna (Salvadori 1989: 107).

The Lohanas

Numbering about 90 people of thirty domestic groups, the Lohanas are a prosperous, powerful and organized Hindu group in Nakuru. They settled in the area since the arrival of the railway line (at the very beginning of the last century), the majority of them being businessmen. The Lohanas have two associations, one for men (*Lohana Mahajan Mandal*) and the other for women (*Lohana Mahila Mandal*). Their temple, *Raghuvansh Bhavan*, is located opposite *Lions Primary School*, currently one of the most reputable private primary schools in Nakuru. The school is meant for children from this community, though it welcomes students from all backgrounds, including a majority from the Indian diaspora. The school's current chairman is a Lohana (2005). In addition, the *Hindu Council* of Nakuru was largely dominated by Lohanas for almost two decades¹². The Lohanas living in Nakuru largely remain tied to endogamous practices. While showing their willingness to overcome these constraints (by choosing their spouse from another Asian community, or even from a European family), almost all young people usually end up bending community directives.

The Prajapatis

There are 19 domestic groups (72 people) in Nakuru belonging to the Prajapati Hindu community. Also known as the Kumbhar, the Prajapatis were originally potters. This profession is not well respected in India. In Kenya, the Prajapatis abandoned their statutory specialty and frequently

(12) When the research was done (2005), the then Chairman had been elected for two years. His own father held the same position in 1982 when the chairman's term was only one year. Another Lohana was chairman in 1995 and 1996, and another one from 2000 to 2002, meaning that the Lohana held the chairmanship for seven years.) The first page of the booklet introducing the community shows colour photos of relatives and fore fathers of the current Lohana chairman.

work as masons or carpenters¹³. In the city of Nakuru, the Prajapatis are represented in many industrial occupations: construction (conventional outlet for masons and carpenters), oil based industries, food and soap industries, automobile industry¹⁴.

The Brahmas

About 45 people (eleven families), the Brahmas are a strictly endogamous group. Only some of its members are engaged in religious activities, others are generally engaged in educational, administrative or service related professions. Their settlement in Nakuru dates back to many decades and the community is represented by the Brahma Samaj association. In the recent past, the community partly revitalized itself by severally welcoming young priests from India. The newcomers came because there were no Brahmins with the required religious training on the ground. The community provided houses in which they settled¹⁵.

The Vanza (or Wanza)

Having been present in East Africa from the nineteenth century, the Vanza or Wanza Darji are among the first immigrants in Kenya. They are sizeable in Mombasa, Nairobi and other towns, though their numbers have greatly reduced. They do not exceed one thousand people in Kenya (Adam 2004: 11). In Nakuru, they form a small community of 26 individuals (seven domestic groups). Almost all of them live in section "58", but they have their shops and stalls in town. Since they have not lost their occupational ties, most of them are still tailors, garment retailers or wholesalers, and even fabric traders. One of the characteristics of the Darji is their progressive attitude towards marriage. Opposed to the excesses of the dowry system (whose practice is also declining in the whole of East Africa), they show a certain tolerance to divorce among women and even accept remarriage of divorced women or widows (Salvadori 1989: 115).

(13) Salvadori (1989: 109).

(14) Although the Prajapati mainly live in section "58" as already mentioned, many of their representatives also live in *Palmac Oil Refineries* housing estate. There are six families, among them the company director, all being employees of this company.

(15) According to the 2005 *Hindu Council Directory*, 10 groups of domestic workers are housed in annexes of different Hindu temples in the town (Jalaram, CGHU, Ram Mandir, and BAPS). There is also a Jain temple of the Visa Oshwal.

The Rajputs

It is known that the Rajputs belong to the *Kshatriya* minority (former aristocrats); their members still work in different socioeconomic sectors and occupy various positions. There are currently about one hundred Rajputs in Kenya. At the beginning of last century, a famous member of this community, Harisinh Gujabhai Jethwa, brought many Rajputs to Nakuru after opening stores for the railway employees (rations shop and grocery)¹⁶. Thus, Nakuru was for some time the centre of the *Kshatriya* community of Kenya. Their association, the East African Rajput League, founded in 1955, still maintains its headquarters in Nakuru, though its local members are now reduced to five families. The Rajputs no longer have their own temple and for this reason, they worship in temples belonging to other orthodox Hindus.

The Arya Samaj (reformed Hindus)

The Arya Samaj reformed movement, which is opposed to the caste principle and idol worship, encourages ascetic behaviour by preaching a return to Vedic principles. They are mostly represented by Punjab belonging to the *vaishya* castes. The Arya Samaj in Kenya were once the most educated group of railway workers (Salvadori 1989: 123). Numbering about a thousand in Kenya, they extol virtues of openness towards Africans, whose rights they defended in colonial times. If their representatives are to be believed, the organizational structure of this group is fully democratic and reserves an active role to women¹⁷. They have been in Nakuru since 1906 where they opened a prayer room that was refurbished and enlarged in 1931. Although the community is now barely 60 people (divided into 21 household groups), its influence is great in the local intellectual life. The Arya Samaj participate in educational activities of the town, both as school managers and as teachers, including in schools attended mostly by Kenyan students¹⁸. Other community members are engaged in industrial and commercial activities (motor vehicles, food industry, public works and construction). While Arya Samaj initially held a modest place in the administration of

(16) Salvadori (1989: 111).

(17) For more information about the Arya Samaj movement in Kenya, read Salvadori (1989: 121-125).

(18) The same Arya Samaj family established and owns 4 private schools in Nakuru: *Shiner's Girls High School*, *Shiner's Boy High School*, *Roots Academy Primary School*, *Jogoo Commercial College*. Arya Samaj members teach or are financially involved in running other private schools in Nakuru: *St. Michael High School*, *Coulson Sec. School Gilgil*, *Melvin Jones Lions*.

the Hindu Council, their influence has grown, suggesting the hypothesis of a modernist approach of the institution's proposed by the group.

The Jains

The Jains have a religion contemporary and close to Buddhism, dating back to the fifth century BC. They are the best known Hindu dissenters. They settled in Kenya along time ago and are particularly numerous in the country (about 15,000 people). They are well represented in Nakuru, both in number (630 persons) and business, being among the most successful groups of all Asian Kenyans. Just like elsewhere in Kenya, in Nakuru they are divided between two regional groups, also separated by a few doctrinal differences: the Navnat and the Oshwal, or Visa Oshwal, who are predominant. Though they remain united, the two Jain communities have formed separate associations (*Visa Oshwal Mahila Mandal* and *Navnat Vanik Mahajan*).

At the national level, the Visa Oshwal Jains are dominant in several economic sectors (banking, insurance, imports and exports, textiles, pharmaceuticals, food industry, supermarkets)¹⁹. There are 144 Visa Oshwal Jain family groups in Nakuru where they work in different sectors, often with high levels of professional qualifications: physicians, pharmacists, engineers, teachers, industrialists and all types of merchants (from specialized business to mass marketing). The Visa Oshwal community in Nakuru has more than 70 industrial, commercial and service companies (textiles, food industry, mechanical engineering, insurance, etc.). The case of *Menengai Oil Refineries* illustrates local success of a vibrant industrial diversification²⁰.

The *Navnat Vanik Mahajan* Community (with 24 domestic groups) is also present in Nakuru and lives in several residential areas (Section 58, *Nakuru Blanket* as well as other areas, including Milimani). Its members specialize in trade (supermarkets, food, etc.), insurance, as well as the automobile industry.

In social life, the Jains exhibit liberal behaviours and are rather tolerant to mixed marriages (even if they strongly continue advocating for endogamy within the community). Moreover, they are advocates

(19) The success of Nakumatt contributed to some Jain families' good reputation in entrepreneurship. Nakumatt was established in 1965 by a Visa Oshwal family and it initially specialized in mattresses and beddings. It is currently the largest chain of supermarkets in Kenya.

(20) Established in 1988 under the name *Menengai Soap Factory* by a family of fabric merchants, this industry initially specialized in manufacturing of soap before expanding its range of products to cooking oil.

of women's emancipation²¹. The local branch of the *Theosophical Society* is headed by a woman and has shown its willingness to accept intermarriage with Africans.

The Sikhs

After Patels and Jains, Sikhs are the third largest in population among communities of Asian origin in Nakuru (200 people split among 80 families that are grouped into 25 household groups). Having been in Nakuru for many decades, (their temple was built there more than sixty years ago), this community is also one of the most dynamic since it is involved in various activities. The Sikhs acquired some sort of speciality in the automobile mechanics and construction industry in Kenya, but are also involved in other industries, including textiles, food processing and tourism²². The presence of several Sikhs in the luxurious residential area of Milimani attests to their economic success.

Although they chose to join the umbrella organization of Hindus, it is a known fact that Sikhs claim to follow a religion that merges different doctrines. Their religion has a strong Muslim influence and is principally opposed to the caste system. In addition, this community showed a rare example in Kenya in that, among all religious communities from India, it tried to convert people to Sikhism by publishing a booklet entitled *Dini ya Sikh* in 1968, whose aim was to explain Sikhism in Kiswahili.

The Sikhs retained their community centre in section "58" of Nakuru (temple, school, headquarters of the *Siri Guru Singh Sabha* Association, etc.) and they work in collaboration with Hindus and Jains in the administration of the Hindu local council²³.

The Cutchi Gujarati Hindu Union and the Kutchi community

Being a vestige of an era where every statutory group was too small to organize itself into an association, the *Cutchi Gujarati Hindu Union* was established in Nakuru in 1905 with the aim of constructing a crematory (completed in 1907). It is therefore the oldest of the federal community based extra regional institutions. Although it still brings together

(21) The example of Sushi Shah, the first elected woman to head the 411 A *Lions Club* District (Kenya and Ethiopia) for the 2004-2005 period is worth mentioning (*District Governor's Annual Report*, 2004-2005).

(22) Note Tayler's Travel Ltd., a major travel agency belonging to a member of the Sikh community.

(23) The local section of the *Hindu Council of Kenya* was headed by a Sikh in 1984, 1989 and 1990. Established in 2004, the youth organization of this institution (*Youth Wing*) was also headed by a Sikh in 2004 and 2005.

Hindus belonging to various *jati* (as already mentioned above and some of them holding dual membership of different associations), the *Cutchi Gujarati Hindu Union* has retained its unique identity. It has one of the oldest temples in Kenya, built in 1914 in the heart of section “58” and is frequented by a multitude of Hindu followers²⁴.

Members of the *Cutchi Gujarati Hindu Union* (some of them among the richest of the Hindu community) are represented by 16 groups and 51 households. The majority of them reside in section “58” but also Milimani and Nakuru Blanket.

Although there is no trace of its existence in the national registry of the Hindu Council, the *Kutchi* community is, just like the *Cutchi Gujarati Hindu Union*, a supra-regional organization, probably claiming to be representatives of a small region called Kachch, which belongs to Gujarat province and occupied by a minority of Kachchi²⁵ language speakers. Mainly based in *Nakuru Blanket* or Section 58, the *Kutchi* community is comprised of twenty domestic groups (74 households) who are engaged in various professional activities, including real estate construction and sale of automobile spare parts.

The South Indian community

Like the *Cutchi Gujarati Hindu Union* and the *Kutchi Community*, the *South Indian Community* is another supra-regional community association that brings together a small number of families from different Hindu communities, but all originating from South India. In Nakuru, the organization includes about forty people (44 households and 12 domestic groups) mainly residing in the section “58” area.

The Muslims

Muslims of Indian origin are present in Nakuru though they are still a small minority among the representatives of the diaspora (350 people in total, approximately 18% of the town’s Asian Kenyans instead of 36% for the whole of Kenya)²⁶. As expected, given the relative importance of the number of Muslims in coastal regions, the proportion of Muslim Asian Kenyans is high in those regions and significantly decreases in districts where Muslims of African origin are themselves poorly represented.

(24) It is a noble building made up of several rooms, surrounded by adjoining constructions and a garden.

(25) Pierre Lachaier’s written communication. In India, Kachch has a maritime façade and known to be the birthplace of the Bhadala or Badala, a small Muslim group specialized in shipbuilding.

(26) Adam (2004: 11).

Just like elsewhere in Kenya, Muslims of Indian origin in Nakuru are divided in two communities, the Sunni and the Shia. But the proportion of Indian Sunnis in this town is slightly higher than the national level (200 out of 350 people or 57% of the total instead of 53.5%)²⁷. This is a small difference for which there is no particular explanation. Muslim Asian Kenyans are generally members of specific community organizations, some of them purely religious (which differentiate affiliation of each group in the case of the Shia), and others which are modelled on those of Hindus and often reflect former statutory stratifications similar to those of Hindu *jatis* (in the case of the Sunni). Sunnis and Shia also adhere to Islamic institutions of ecumenical nature like the *Islamic Foundation* (dominated by Sunnis), the *East African Muslim Welfare Association* (dominated by the Ismailia) or the *Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims* (an authority that represents all Muslims to the government). Finally, Sunnis of Indian origin have a common organization with the Swahili and Somali Muslims living in the town: the Muslim Association of Nakuru.

The Ismaili

Like in the rest of Kenya, and generally like elsewhere in the world, the Ismailia of Nakuru virtually control managerial positions: supermarket owners, hotel owners, industrialists, architects, doctors, etc. With 60 people, the community is represented by the *Ismailis Aga Khanis* association. Apart from the community's internal administration (dealing with statutory issues, *Marriage Council*, *Religion Board*, *Education Board*, *Social Welfare Board*), the association is particularly dedicated to benevolent work.

The Bohra

Being Ismailia dissidents, the Bohra (Tayyibi Dawoodi) form a small discreet community in Nakuru of about twenty families, generally dispersed in residential areas belonging to Asians. Nevertheless, they have a place of worship. Like elsewhere in East Africa, Nakuru Bohras are traders and businessmen, specialized in hardware, glassware, health facilities and property management. They are more attentive to women's advancement than the Ithnasheri, their closest religious cousins. They are no less concerned about their attire, requiring them to wear a long skirt and a *bui bui* (a cap that resembles the Islamic veil).

(27) Adam (2004: 26).

The Ithnasheri

The Ithnasheri (Shia Muslims linked to the dominant Shi'ism) are about thirty families in Nakuru and generally pursue business. Despite their small numbers, they have their own mosque. They do not belong to Muslim ecumenical associations but are members of the *Bilal Muslim Mission of Kenya*, an association meant for conversion to Islam. The Ithnasheri of Nakuru do not seem to contradict the reputation of social conservatism that is meant for the Kenyan Ithnasheri in general. Ithnasheri women usually wear the *chador* or the *hijab* and long skirts and few of them are engaged in professional activities. All of their marriages are arranged. Mostly originating from what is now Pakistan (former western provinces of India), the Ithnasheri of Nakuru speak Urdu, which makes them somewhat different from other communities of Indian origin in the town because almost all of them originated from Gujarat.

The Sunni

The Sunni are about 200 people in Nakuru and the majority belongs to the three major Sunni organizations represented in Kenya: the Punjabi, the Cutchi and the Memon. Punjabi Muslims are engaged in various professions (especially in trade and industry), and are particularly known for their socially liberal positions, particularly in relation to matrimonial alliances. They accept (though this is not encouraged) occasional unions with Africans. Sunnis of Indian origin lack their own place of worship and for this reason, they share Jaamia Mosque with the Swahili and Somali. This mosque is used by all Sunni followers in town.

Professional diversification and social development

As noted in the preceding chapters, lack of economic specialization is a common characteristic among various communities of Indian origin living in Nakuru. There is also a second feature that has not been discussed so far and is a result of the first one: the capacity to revitalize activities. Many Asian Kenyan entrepreneurs exhibit opportunistic behaviours that make them quickly change their activities. In fact, they do not hesitate to abandon a previous activity, or to establish a second one which is sometimes very different from the previous one. Though stories of individual upward mobility usually conceal the difficulties and failures met, the variety of industrial and commercial careers provides an overview of qualities that Asian Kenyan business families are known for; that is to say: anticipation, adaptation and financial audacity. It is

possible that the “positive versatility” shown with this type of behaviour is related to immigration status, which motivated them to venture in business while intercommunity social control has considerably weakened (Adam 2010: 230). In addition, the second explanatory factor (and which is related to the first one) is relatively based on the homogeneous character of the origins of their social status because a big majority of immigrants belong to castes (or virtual castes among non-Hindus) from intermediate-level hierarchy of the ranks of different *vaishya* (*Ibid*: 227).

Indeed, a systematic analysis of individual careers contradicts a widespread notion within the non-Indian observers that the community is uniformly wealthy. A visit to section 58 in Nakuru shows that while many Kenyan Asian residents have luxurious villas surrounded by gardens, others simply live in overcrowded apartments that open onto narrow and unhealthy courtyards. All the same, compared to the economic situation that characterized – in the past and today – recent immigrant families, almost all of them have had a substantial upward mobility, even spectacular for a few of them.

Business and prestige: The path of an Asian Kenyan family

The special case of a Cutchi Gujarati Leva Patel family, whose business career we would like to trace is a success story, marked by an economic opportunistic business attitude that complies with the preceding remarks. The economic rise is viewed by the head of the family as a divine blessing. As such, he considers it appropriate to make people around him benefit, that is his family and the community at large. Family representatives belong to several charities, which in turn provide a network of useful relationships that are beneficial to his business activities and contribute in enhancing his prestige.

TK... X... is a well-known person in Nakuru town. He is the owner of an important company specializing in the food canning and has a strong workforce of hundreds of employees (180 permanent employees and 1,000 casual employees). Being an entrepreneur, TK contributes to the *Kenya Association of Manufacturers*. He is also a trustee for the *Hindu Council of Kenya* local branch and Chairman of the *Hindu Temple (Cutchi Gujarati Hindu Temple)*. These honorary duties are related to his economic power as well as the importance of his networks. Born in India, TK arrived in Mombasa in 1961 after marrying the daughter of a family that had settled in Kenya two generations earlier and was doing business in Mombasa and Limuru (near Nairobi city). In 1966, being an

associate in his in-laws' businesses and in collaboration with one of his brothers in law, TK opened a branch of the family company in Nakuru. The story of his social mobility may be food for thought concerning this type of cultural attitude supported by ambition, confidence, fearlessness, perseverance and ability to constantly adapt to new circumstances. From his hometown, TK crossed the ocean aboard a precarious boat (*dhow*), the same type of vessel that was subsequently feted as one of the ingredients of the myth of the "the borderless Indian". The memory of his arrival in Mombasa, on 31st October 1961, is very vivid in his mind and he talks about it during interviews until today. To him, this date reveals the importance attached to the very fact of migration, the birth of a new life.

It is clear that the bride's family is the key to TK's success. Nevertheless, his willingness to rise and social recognition greatly contribute to his promotion. While he had taken significant responsibilities in the sales department of the family company, it was after creating his own company in Nakuru in 1978 that he crossed the first steps of his illustrious career in industry. Still associated with his brother, TK made use of the family network to sell his goods. It is in Nakuru that TK made a fortune. By virtue of his intuition, he developed an expanding economic sector: food canning. TK initially produced for the domestic market, but later turned to the export market after responding to a proposal by a French firm already set up in Kenya. Later on, his activities were based on the principle of diversification. In this way, there were continuous business deals, the first ones being the continuity of the initial activity: freezing and drying of fruits and vegetables, selling spices, selling flowers (roses). Afterwards, he diversified his business activities to other sectors like banking and the Internet²⁸. Currently, TK has also made other investments in India and England. He controls these investments through family networks.

Since he is successful in business, TK is a member of about twelve cultural, religious and philanthropic associations²⁹. If it is easy to relate

(28) The agreement with Bonduelle and Saupiquet ended in 2001 after the French firm decided to get supplies from countries that were proposing cheaper prices. However, T.K. continued with his export activities.

(29) It is worth mentioning that in 2006, he was in five Hindu associations: *Cutchi Gujarati Hindu*, *Union Jalaram Temple* (chairing), *Ram Mandir* (steering committee member), *Hindu Council of Kenya* (trustee); two Patel associations: *Patidar Samaj* (trustee and steering committee member), *Patel Brotherhood* (council member and former secretary general); a philanthropic association: the *Lions Club* (former two-term district chairman and district leader).

to economic success, the desire to assert social prestige and the network logic involved in such participation in associations, religious investment can also be interpreted as a believer's response to God's grace. This can be compared to Weber's model of the Protestant ethic (Salvadori 1989: 95)³⁰. Social achievements must also be shown: the TK villa in the posh Milimani area of Nakuru is an example of success. There are always three or four cars in the parking yard: Mercedes Benz and 4WD cars. Inside the villa, ostentatious signs display the success and show the family members' social status: photos and pictures (illustrious fore fathers, members of the extended family living in European countries), diplomas, awards, medals, certificates of club membership, awards from different associations, etc.).

Religious investment is associated with the practice of giving and sharing, which is a fundamental requirement of Hinduism³¹. TK stresses the fact that he has always helped small African entrepreneurs by providing credit to future traders. TK also states that he treats his employees well, both at the factory and at home. In turn, his employees are dedicated to work and remain loyal to him.

Matrimonial alliances

The vast majority of marriages in families of Indian origin in Nakuru are arranged. After removing the risks of incestuous alliance (clan exogamy is still the practice everywhere), preference is always given to candidates from the same community. Marriage therefore plays the role of strengthening the group and also confirms and renews the network of family solidarity, especially for migratory reasons. In particular, when the future partners have willingly participated³², they mostly accept their parents' choices. However, in case of problems in the marriage, they can in retrospect criticize it. In comparison to "European" marriages,

(30) While talking about East African Asians, Cynthia Salvadori wrote that "Non-Catholic Christians do not have the monopoly on what is usually called protestant ethic."

(31) Max Weber recognizes that economic ethic has never been determined by religion alone because life is also influenced by economic and political factors "within given geographic, political, social and national limits" (Weber, 1996: 332-333). It is possible to relate the Kenyan Asians' personal success ethic with the Kikuyu's self-actualisation model ("a person's fulfilment"). The Kikuyu are the most important ethnic group in Kenya and are well represented in Nakuru. But if there are some aspects that are similar (metempsychosis, fear of getting tainted, social obligation in sharing and family solidarity), the differences are clear in the sense that the Indian model is pantheistic and hierarchical while the Kikuyu model is rather egalitarian.

(32) A Lohana father stated, "My daughters were given the freedom to marry any Asian but I would be happiest if they chose a Lohana. In fact, that is exactly what they did when they met Lohanas in Great Britain."

arranged marriages are sometimes presented as a superior form of alliance. From its defenders point of view, the Indian style marriage can be considered as learning the art of loving a person. In choosing the latter, aren't parents a better judge since they know and love their children better than someone else? According to the proponents of arranged marriage, the choice of this type of marriage depends not only on the socio-economic factors, but also on other personal information: aesthetic, psychological and moral.

Respondents on this issue – parents and young people – suggest a current trend towards “modernization” of marriage³³. However, this tendency hardly seems to have taken root in the town of Nakuru. Behind planned marriages, there is always a significant interference by the family group on the girl's or the boy's individual paths. The family provides the means to develop professional capacities and wishes – provided that they are realized in a predetermined and more or less strict order. While girls and boys (especially boys) will take the family path in life already established by their parents, parents will make considerable sacrifices on their side (including sending them to study far away and in expensive institutions) to realize the dream of self-fulfilment through affiliation. So as not to be outdone, children will demonstrate their gratitude by accepting instructions concerning the future marriage. The feeling of deep appreciation towards parents is therefore counterbalanced by the latter's interference in the choice of the spouse³⁴. It is however not uncommon for the young people – maybe because of frustration or due to unconscious compensation for obedience – to have some sort of mock romance which somehow “cheers up” the sad logic of arranged marriages. Whether chosen or approached by parents, the future spouse becomes a love object for whom it is supposed to be “love at first sight.”³⁵.

(33) We mean by this term a Western type of marriage where the youth choose (at least apparently) their partners.

(34) Some parents' comments on this issue are listed, some of them are rather moderate and close to what European parents would say: “She is free to choose but she has to first pursue her studies” (W.N., a Sunni talking about her grand-daughter); “I would like her marriage to be a happy one, she should get a learned and well-established person” (R.P...X.); “I do not want to decide for her what she will do, but I train and counsel her (K.P.B.)”; “We would like him to study abroad. He can marry anyone, but certainly not an African!” (an Arya Samaj mother); “I will encourage her in areas where she excels; we shall give her the freedom to marry when she wishes; but we are not forgetting the fact that we have taught her how to behave” (a young Lohana mother).

(35) Some people explain how they see their own marriages as follows: “According to my husband, I fell in love with him” (an Arya Samaj woman). Also read remarks by Michel Adam on the Bollywood effect in the chapter dedicated to marriages.

According to traditions of Northern India, combined with that of the joint family, marriage is primarily *patrilocal*. This means that the wife comes to live in the father-in-law's family home where she will be mostly under the supervision of her mother-in-law. However, this requirement is occasionally challenged by one of the local effects of "arranged marriage", namely the need – in the diaspora's demographic context – to get a husband from abroad. As noted by Michel Adam, the reversal of the residency rule also often masks the existence of female hypergamy which is either based on rank or wealth³⁶.

The practice of paying dowry seems not very widespread. In contrast, an educated woman (especially when she is a university graduate) is an asset in transactions between rich families. As elsewhere in Kenya – and sometimes despite contrary claims – intermarriage with Africans (in reality African women) remains rare and limited, except in the case of Sunni Muslims as earlier mentioned.

Associations

The preceding pages have discussed the importance of associations in the collective existence of Asian Kenyans living in Nakuru. There are two types of associations: 1) those belonging to a particular community (and which are often confused with a local caste organization), 2) umbrella organizations that bring together several statutory and regional communities or several religious communities (for example those that bring Hindus and Muslims together).

The first type of associations serves as a meeting point for each community and in many cases, it is through various activities that are common to them (women's clubs, children's activities, etc.). This is one of the privileged places for women's advancement. As representatives of micro-cultures, they first appear as a kind of extension of the extended family – to share each community's statutory and religious customs among themselves in peace and security. The context of migration in East Africa is marked by both socio-cultural isolation and tolerance (inherited from the British influence) towards a multiplicity of identities. In this connection, associations also play the role of a semi-autonomous government rendering various services (civil justice and arbitration, education, urban protection, assistance, etc.).

At the beginning of the diaspora, umbrella associations exercised the same functions as the first type of associations, although with

(36) Read the chapter about marriages in this book.

less efficiency given the existing diversity of particularities among all immigrants. They have now largely changed. Their primary role is to ensure interaction across communities – thus counterbalancing the centripetal logic of each *gnati mandal* (regional and statutory association). Another mission is to represent all or part of the diaspora abroad. This task is not only to defend collective interests to administrative and political authorities (especially in situations of xenophobic threats, as was sometimes experienced almost everywhere in East Africa). In addition, umbrella associations have currently taken up the mission of leading others in being open towards the African population, which has largely remained reluctant to get into contact with the diaspora – except for commercial or professional reasons.

We have already mentioned community associations (*Brahma Samaj*, *East African Rajput League*, *Lohana Mahajan Mandal*, *Lohana Mahila Mandal*, *Charotar Patida*, etc.) and it is needless to discuss them again. Among the umbrella community associations, three of them deserve special comments.

The *Cutchi Gujarati Hindu Union* is closely associated with the *Hindu Temple*, which is the headquarters. Although all Hindus are not members of the association (especially Hindus from the South, not to mention the Jains and Sikhs), all prefer the Hindu temple where its ecumenical nature is affirmed. Apart from daily worship (morning and evening), the temple also organizes at least one ceremony per week, hoping to attract young people whose enthusiasm is fading everywhere. The recent recruitment of Brahmins from India together with their families has been already discussed. These newcomers contribute to the revival of ties with the motherland and renew the expatriate community.

The *Hindu Council of Kenya* was established in 1973 (although it was formed in 1968), succeeding the *Indian Association* (which brought Indians of all religious communities, including Muslims together during the colonial period). In the beginning, the *Hindu Council of Kenya* only brought together followers of orthodox Hinduism, combining all statutory communities. From 1982, the *Hindu Council* integrated most secessionist groups, including Jains and the majority of Sikhs as mentioned several times before (Salvadori 1989: 332). The Hindu Council federates associations (not individuals) and currently, its local branch has 24 representatives (two for each of the 12 Hindu communities present at Nakuru)³⁷.

(37) *Arya Samaj* (Hindu breakaways), *Brahma Samaj* (Brahmans), *Cutchi Gujarati Hindu Union* (supra-community *cutchi* organisation), *Kutchi*, *Lohana* (statutory organisation: *gnati*),

The aim of the *Hindu Council* is to maintain cultural and religious identities through publications, language lessons, performances, not to mention social, sports and professional gatherings. The organization is also involved in mutual and philanthropic activities, particularly in health and urban protection. Through its headquarters in Nairobi, it facilitates relationships with foreign communities, whether in India or in other countries. It also intercedes in individuals' administrative issues, including immigration. It organizes various religious ceremonies as well as national celebrations for Kenyan citizens, especially for majority of its members with Kenyan citizenship. At the town level, the Hindu Council is the preferred contact of the local political authorities. The Hindu Council therefore participates in some political consultations and plays an important role as a pressure group given the economic weight of some of its members.

The Muslims' Association (*Muslim Association*) is the second largest umbrella community organization in Nakuru. Founded after the Second World War by the Sunni Koknis from Mombasa, this association, as noted earlier, unites Sunni followers of all origins. In fact, Africans have become the majority (out of thirteen board members, only five of them – including the current chairman – are of Indian origin. It carries out important philanthropic and charitable activities (education, medical assistance, assistance aged people, financial contribution in funerals). The Muslim Association is also striving to bring Indians closer to Africans. The Shia of Indian origin (Ismailia, Bohra and Ithnasheri) have no umbrella organization because they have isolated themselves, a situation that negatively affects their social integration at the local level (unlike – as it seems – the Shia who settled in the coastal region of Kenya).

Though clubs have not been mentioned so far, clubs represent the last type of umbrella community social groupings. The *Lions Club* of Nakuru is a non-religious and transboundary organization that plays a semi-brotherhood role and recruits its members from the local ruling class. Asians have become the largest majority since independence but the club also accommodates Africans³⁸. However, their participation

Navnat Vanik Mahajan (minority branch of Jains), *Patel* (statutory organisation: *gnati*), *Prajapati* (statutory organisation: *gnati*), *Rajput* (statutory organisation of *Kshatryia*), *Sikh Community* (Sikhs), *South Indian Community* (extra community organisation of Southern Indians), *Vanza Community* (statutory organisation: *gnati*) and *Visa Oshwal Community* (minority branch of Jains).

(38) The *Lions Club* of Kenya was established in Nairobi in 1958 by an Asian who had been denied entry to the *Rotary Club*, which was governed by apartheid rules. Originally

remains very low considering the high annual subscription. Although prevention against Africans does not exist at the local scale, any one can assume that the strong presence of members of Asian origin also inhibits minority candidates whatever their origin. Through their club, members of Asian origin do not only content themselves with the feeling of being members of a truly international corporation of notables; they also participate in an extensive network of cosmopolitan relationships, often connected to their own professional networks.

Temptation of a fresh departure

Today, a glimpse of the Indian diaspora's situation suggests the fact that Asian Kenyans in Nakuru generally agree that their numbers are continuously decreasing. This is a local reflection of the fact that Kenya is losing its attractiveness in relation to other English-speaking destinations (Great Britain, United States, Canada and Australia). In adults, the willingness for expatriation is likely to be motivated by several reasons (economic hardship, rejoining parents who have already left, fear of insecurity, desire for a peaceful retirement, etc.). On the other hand, fascination for the Western countries in general is what motivates the youth today. Secondly, the temptation of departure can be relied on freedom of movement that is attached to the lives of Westerners, especially in romantic and marital matters. It follows that the desire for further studies abroad (a Western country in this case) seems to be almost unanimous. However the future (expatriation or final return) is never planned at this time. Of course, it is not possible for all families to implement such projects. Regardless of financial conditions, opportunities between boys and girls are unequal (the latter being more incited to pursue their studies locally, except on the assumption of following their husbands). As for the boys, the paradox is that it is often the richest ("heirs" of companies based in Kenya) who are in fact encouraged to come back and settle in the country. Of course, this does not undermine the principle of studying abroad. In this regard, knowing the extreme importance that all parents of Asian origin attach to their children's education, there is no doubt that the initial number of candidates who go abroad for further studies will only increase in the future.

consisting of Asian members, Africans and liberal Europeans (the first chairman was nonetheless a European), the Lions became very popular among Asians and they quickly took over its control. Like all similar clubs, the Lions recruit members by co-opting them (Salvadori 1989: 339).

Conclusion

In absolute terms, but more so in relative terms, the Asian population in Nakuru is decreasing and is now hardly more than 0.8% of the total population in a town whose population is strongly growing. However, these modest figures, combined with some behavioural discretion, should not fool the casual observer. As in other Kenyan towns, minorities of Asian origin play a major role in Nakuru's economic and social life, a role that is disproportionate to their population. Their influence on industrial production and commercial activities is predominant. As noted earlier on, different communities in the diaspora are involved in numerous philanthropic and charitable activities through networks of associations. In some respect, these collective commitments can serve as a guarantor of citizenship in a socio-political context that is still marked by its colonial past. Associative networks are thus an obvious way to cut a niche of additional power in order to participate more actively in social life, outside purely political networks given the fact that Kenyan Asians are still largely excluded from politics. Cynthia Salvadori had earlier proposed this hypothesis and it is valid according to us (Salvadori 1989: 340). At the local and national levels proponents of inter community coexistence agree that an increase in individual relationships (though friendship and... marriage in particular) would effectively contribute in consolidating the future Asian Kenyan presence in the country.

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Appendix

Table 8.1 Demographic information (2005)

Hindu:				
Brahmas			45	
Kshatrya Rajput			9	
Vaishya			573	
	<i>Including:</i>			
	Lohana		90	
	Patel	350		
	Wanza		10	
	Gurjar Sutar	10		
	Nayee	15		
	Soni		6	
	Kumbhar		50	
	Maharashtra Mandal	30		
	Mochi		8	
	Dhobi	4		
	Jains		630	
	Sikhs		240	
	Punjabi Arya Samaj		30	
				1,527
Muslims:				
Bohra			60	
Ismalia			60	
Ithnasheri			30	

Sunnis			200	
				350
Christians:				
Goans				15
Total				1,892

Source : Community associations

Migrations and Identity of Indian-Pakistani Minorities in Uganda

Godfrey B. ASIIMWE

Stakeholders in the national society, the Ugandan Indians were brutally expelled by dictator Idi Amin in 1972¹. However, they began returning to Uganda in the early 1990s and have, over the years, become a powerful minority group, ensuring their sustainability through a combination of hard work, prudence and political acumen².

The history of the Indian diaspora in Uganda began with British colonization³. From the earliest days of colonial occupation, the British administrators made use of temporary Indian workers as well as mercenaries from the North of the subcontinent. These troops then

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- (1) The author would like to sincerely thank all his Ugandan Asian contact persons for trusting him and taking time to answer his questions. He is also grateful to his assistant, Sarah Nakamya as well as the French Institute for Research in Africa (IFRA) for funding this research.
 - (2) This research is based on documentary data, especially data dating from the earliest period as well as on the research carried out by the author on the main representatives of the Indian diaspora in Kampala between March and June 2006. The author was able to do about fifteen detailed interviews with about fifteen heads of organizations (See appendix 1). In addition, thanks to random sampling, 22 people of Indian origin were interviewed (19 men and 3 women). The small number of women represented in the sample is explained by the fact that it is difficult to make the women accept to be interviewed. A questionnaire that had both closed and open questions was administered to the 22 respondents (see appendix 2).
 - (3) In order to put an end to some controversies, it goes without saying that Indians must not be considered to have deliberately taken part in the colonial project in Africa. They were rather dependent on the British colonial system, and they were thus used by the latter to consolidate their settlement.

remained in the country for more than a quarter century. This explains why Indian soldiers were used to overcome the resistance of Kings Kabalega of Bunyoro and Mwanga of Buganda. According to Mangat:

In 1895, a contingent of three hundred Punjabi troops from India regiment was sent to Uganda to join the colonial army. In 1897, Major Macdonald, commander of the colonial forces in Uganda, received thirty Sikhs, recruited specifically for Uganda. In the same year another one hundred and fifty troops were dispatched from India to Uganda. In 1898, four hundred more troops found their way into Uganda (Mangat 1969).

Taking over from merchants that had already settled in the coastal towns of Lamu, Pate, Malindi, Mombasa, Pemba, Zanzibar, Bagamoyo and Dar-es-Salaam, several waves of Indian immigrants followed the railway line from Mombasa to Lake Victoria and to other pioneer colonial towns that were coming up. They were workers and maintenance staff, masons, wheelwrights, carpenters, tailors, nurses, laundry workers, secretaries and teachers, not to mention the small traders attracted by the prospects that the new colony was opening to the outside world. Regardless of this spontaneous immigration, the contract system of recruitment used in the construction of the railway became the alternative form of work after the abolition of slavery (Tinker 1974, Saunders 1984, Northrup 1995)⁴. India was chosen as the preferred source of manpower because for many centuries, it had a large number of skilled workers who were already popular with the British and were frequently under employed (Tinker 1974: 41-61). Other authors compared Indians to native Africans, noting that Indians were “more qualified and effective” while Africans were “indolent” and “rebellious to work”. In this regard, Lugard wrote: “Such a judgment (concerning natives’ capacity for hard work) is fully justified seeing that the savages’ needs are limited solely to their daily food, which can be supplied without efforts due to soil fertility” (Lugard 1893: 471). In accordance with this contrasting and dividing representation of populations subjected to colonial rule, the British used it to impose a strict separation between communities (Gregory 1971: 51; 1993: 160).

After completion of the railway construction in 1902, a small percentage of workers required on-site, opted to remain in East Africa. In

(4) Other indentured labourers were recruited on contract terms at the same time in British Guyana (239,000), in Trinidad (150,000), in Jamaica (38,600), in British West Indies (11,200), in the French West Indies (979,000), in Surinam (34,500), in Mauritius Islands (455,000), in Reunion (75,000). Read Northrup (1995: 53).

subsequent years, new immigrants – mostly traders – settled in Uganda. In 1911, the number of Indians in the country was a total of 1 852 men and 364 women. As their business prospered, they called on their family and community relatives to send new immigrants from India in form of employees and associates (Nabudere 1980: 73-74; Mamdani 1976: 69, 80). Using their savings, they in turn established new shops (*duka*), thus ensuring that small scale Indian traders were present in the hinterland (*dukuwallah*). The Indian immigration in Uganda continued to be encouraged by the colonial officials. In the early twentieth century, Commissioner Sir Harry Johnston said that he wanted Indians to play an intermediary role “between Africans and Europeans.” While there were few British traders in the colony, the Indians, with whom the colonial administration had very old relations, were considered the most likely to encourage African people to open up to the money market (Morris 1968).

Many Indians living in Uganda were instrumental in transforming the country as agents of the new economic order imposed by the colonial administration. Sheth Allidina Visram Lalji may be cited as an example in this regard. He was born in India in 1851 to an Ismailia family and arrived in Africa at the age of twelve. He was first employed by Indian traders and later opened his own shop in 1877 in Bagamoyo, a coastal city in Tanzania located opposite Zanzibar. He was a versatile trader who dealt in cloves, ivory and paraffin products collected in Africa and exchanged in India for fabrics. He also specialized in supplies for hunting expeditions and safaris. When the construction of the railway began, Allidina established his base in Mombasa and opened many shops designed to provide food and other necessities to Indian workers on site. His business empire can be currently considered as the pioneer mode of “chain stores” because it soon exceed 200 “branches”, scattered in Eastern and Central Africa. This position earned Allidina the title of “uncrowned king of East Africa”. After opening a retail shop in Kampala, he embarked on buying, ginning and exportation of cotton, an activity that gave him access to remote areas. At the end of 1904, he put up trading posts in the West of the colony. He agreed to buy locally and at fixed prices, all products presented to him. When competitors come between him and sellers⁵, he paid for the goods through an auction system. The business mainly belonged to the family and was expanded

(5) Commissioner Sandler's statement, General report on the Ugandan protectorate, *Africa*, XII, 1904, Cd 2250: 6-7.

by several relatives and close friends. His consortium peaked just before the World War I began. This event abruptly crushed his investments⁶.

Indian heritage in Uganda

The Indian identity in Uganda can be seen in most public areas in the country, especially in Kampala and its suburbs, where many streets and squares are named (or were until recently named) after eminent Indians. One of Kampala's busiest streets, the current Luwum Street – formerly Bokasa Street (named after dictator Idi Amin's former friend) – was originally called Allidina Visram because he established the first business in this city as previously mentioned⁷. At Buziga, a suburb of Kampala, Ramathan Gava Street is a reminder of the person who, in the 1950s, spearheaded the construction of Nabisunsa and Kibuli, the first Muslim secondary schools in Uganda. Another street (Shimoni road), owes its name to Shimoni islands where former Indian railway workers previously stayed. In Bugolobi, another suburb of Kampala, the Bandali Rise evokes memories of Bandali Jaffer, a former cotton exporter who arrived in Kampala in 1895 and whose son, Bandali Sherali Jaffer, now owns Fairway Hotel. In the old city of Kampala, where most Indians still live, there are other public areas bearing Indian names, such as the Delhi gardens and Rashid Khamis Street. According to one of our informants, Bamunanika village that is located in Luwero District owes its name to a guru called Baba Nanak, who was the first Indian to visit this place⁸. Indians have settled in many urban and commercial centres, and their socio-spatial organization has not changed since the beginning. In some towns, there were distinct residential areas separately meant for Europeans and Indians and were popularly called *Kijungu* (for Whites) and *Kiyindi* (for Indians). Behind these two urban strata, there were, and still are, residential areas meant for African workers and small scale traders, who are generally restricted in suburbs such as Kartwe in Kampala or Kitoro in Entebbe. After the expulsion of Indians in 1972, some African suburbs, as Kitoro in Entebbe became more active because Indian businesses were taken over by Africans.

The Indian success

Some history books defend the thesis that courage, business intuition and manoeuvring skills are behind the economic success of East African

(6) Allidina Visram died in 1916.

(7) *Sunday Magazine*, 12 December 2004.

(8) Statement by Kripal Singh on 19th May 2006, Appollo Kagwa road.

Indians. In particular, these research works highlight the contrast that exists between the laborious austerity among Indian families on one hand and the ostentatious lifestyle of European settlers, or the “the natives indolence”. The same Africans later became envious of property acquired by representatives of the diaspora. Such views underscore the determination, energy and strength of character shown by the early Indian traders, whether it is the famous Allidina Visram as already mentioned, or simple small scale shopkeepers, “men without capital, but with a lot of initiative”, who brought modern goods up to the “most remote areas” (Ramchandani 1976: 86; Abidi 1996). Without abandoning the colonial era negative representation, the historian Ramchandani wrote: “Indians established their businesses in every corner of the Karamoja, the protectorate’s isolated North-eastern region where one still finds tribes of naked women and men like worms similar to those living in the Stone Age” (Ramchandani 1976: 86). Vali Jamal, another historian of Indian origin, says that Indians have the capacity to work hard for long hours, to live modestly without comfort and without ostentation and can live on local foodstuff as well as on other local products. According to the same author, this explains why they have the capacity to save. Jamal continues saying that “even in the consumption of necessities, their share (the Indians) was much lower than that of the other races” (Jamal 1976: 605).

The logic behind the Indians’ commercial expansion (usually belonging to the family or the community) is based on the principle of hierarchical network where the network leader (entrepreneur, wholesale merchant) places new immigrant dependants in strategic positions. Thus Mamdani underlines the fact – though this is often overlooked – that the early *dukawallah* was a commercial worker or a businessman’s agent, rather than an independent entrepreneur” (Mamdani 1976: 80):

At first, as the wholesaler extended his operations he encouraged his poor relations from India to join him as assistants to run his shops; later, as prosperity became plenty, the circle of relations extended to the community of caste or sect fellows. The wholesaler also supplied and bought from small but semi-independent *dukawallahs* who acted as his agents. He supplied them with a variety of imports, which they sold in return for local produce that he marketed internationally. The agent was tied to the wholesaler not as an employee but by chains of credit. More often than not, he was a caste fellow who had been encouraged to migrate from India to East Africa. (Mamdani 1976: 80)

When the *dukawallah* saves enough money to settle independently, he in turn sets up a community network to recruit his employees and commercial dependants. Mamdani affirms that:

Nasser Virjee came to East Africa as an assistant to Allidina Visram in the 1890s and by 1910 he had established his own shop and was setting up branches and importing assistants himself. Karmali Alibhai, who arrived in 1910 as an employee of Nasser Virjee had by the 1920s himself become a *dukawallah* (Mamdani 1976: 81).

In 1954, the 5819 licensed traders of the Uganda colony belonged to 32 different castes and communities. But 70% of them (4011) came from only three socio-religious groups: Hindu Lohanas, Hindu Patels and Ismailia Shia Muslims (Mamdani, 1976: 81). It is within these groups that a rich Indian Ugandan business class came up, and this class is currently the proprietor of major family business empires. There are examples of names like Jayant and Ronak Madhvani (Lohana), Nanji Kalidas Metha (Lohana) or Ali Mohamed Karmali (Ismailia). The forefather of the Madhvani arrived in Uganda in the early years of the twentieth century and established one of the leading industrial groups in the country; Nanji Kalidas Mehta became a famous sugar producer; in 1904, Ali Mohamed Karmali was a low cadre employee in a shop in Jinja. He later established an important coffee and cotton trade. Karmali's name was so popular that Ugandans nicknamed him *Mukwano gwa bangi* (meaning a "friend of many people"). The short form of the nickname, "*Mukwano*" subsequently became the name of his business empire⁹.

Another explanation for the economic success of Indians in Uganda lies in the facilities that were given to them by the British at a time when there was strict discrimination between ethnic groups. While Africans were subjected to the role of producing basic goods, Indians were put in an intermediary position, allowing them access to the public service and this in turn gave them lucrative commercial and industrial openings. While the Indian trade made good use of numerous regulatory measures introduced by the colonial power (in terms of access to credit, taxation, licenses and other forms of control), they were the biggest obstacle in the promotion of African trade (Ehrich 1965, Brett 1973; Zwanenberg & King 1975; Mamdani 1976: 72; Okereke 1978; Nabudere 1980, Asiimwe 2007). Although relegated to second place behind the European minority, Indians again benefited from political benefits that

(9) It is important to mention Vithaldas Haridas, Jamal Walji and Haji Adam among other eminent Ugandan Asian names.

were denied to Africans. For example they got a seat in the Legislative Council when it was established in 1921¹⁰.

The strategic intermediary position occupied by the Indian community ensured its economic eminence and personal enrichment, though it also posed a serious danger. By putting Asians in direct contact with Africans, this intermediary position made them more unpopular among the latter while on the other hand, Europeans remained relatively distanced from Africans.

The Asian's great liability well has been their visibility. As a mercantile class dealing with African peasants, often as the representative of foreign capital, they played an all too conspicuous role in the local economy; when Africans were faced with falling prices for their crops or rising costs in the towns, the agents who they confronted were the Asian middlemen (Mittelman 1975: 229).

Relations between Indians and Africans during the colonial period

From the beginning of the colonial era, a section of Indians shared common religions with some Africans: Christianity (mainly Roman Catholic Goans from the Indian side) and Islam (though among Indians, these were divided between Sunni Muslims and Shia Muslims who were nonetheless hardly represented among African Muslims). On their part, Hindus had no African followers. Furthermore, it is well known that African societies – just like societies with Christian and Islamic traditions – do not recognize the principle of castes, a situation that deepened socio-cultural differences between Indians and Africans. However, within the Muslim community, followers belonging to distinct communities were likely to participate together in the same rituals. For example this was the case with Sunni followers of Alidina Visram mosque in the old town of Kampala. Although few in number, there were also African *Ahmadiyya* movement followers, a tiny Muslim group from India. On their part, the Shia Ismailia had very few followers of African origin (and do not have much today). Taken over by Sunni Ugandans after the expulsion of Indians in 1972, the Ismailia mosque in Kampala was returned to the Aga Khan followers after their return

(10) Demanding equal representation like Europeans, Indians refused the seat up to 26th May 1926 when this was finally accepted by Mr. Amin Chrunabai Jekabhai. All the same, Indians did not abandon their demands. In 1933, they got a second representative (Wild Report, in Ibingira 1973: 110).

to Uganda. Since then, the Ismailia are working with Sunni Muslims in various charitable organizations¹¹.

Apart from the religious sphere, relationships between Indians and Africans were confined to two areas that were generally quite limited, but both characterized by inequality: the hierarchical relationship between employer, and employee and the unequal economic relation between the seller and the buyer. Grouped in the same residential areas (like the old town of Kampala), Indians hardly entertained personal relationships with Africans, including those who worked for them as employees in their firms or domestic staff. The colonial policy of dividing communities gave Indians an ethnic identity which reinforced class division, and whose presence was very distinctive.

Three examples illustrate the first situation characterizing the relationship between employers and employees. In the public service, Africans were frequently placed under the supervision of Indian managers (*bwana*); in Indian families, African women house helps (*ayah*) were at the service of Indian mistresses (*mem-sahib*); in businesses and industries, almost all of the junior staff was made up of Africans. Regarding relations between sellers and buyers, Indian traders were faced with poorly educated Africans who had very low purchasing power in an area characterized by irregular transactions in a monopolistic system aimed at profit maximization.

Due to cultural differences and matrimonial taboos that were in force among Indians, there were also few or no marriages between Indians and Africans. Relationships between men and women from the two communities were limited to a few informal and semi-clandestine couples or to the existence of mixed-race children born of Indian men with African prostitutes.

It was however possible to encounter cases of business association or even forms of non-professional relationships between Indians and Africans. Thus, among Africans, quite a few well-to-do farmers or parsimonious employees enlisted the help of Indian traders to open retail outlets. Similarly, former *ayahs* and other domestic house helps in Indian families remained grateful to their former employers and maintained links with them. However, it must be admitted that these examples were frequently contradicted by testimonies of African peasants complaining of fraudulent transactions committed by Indian buyers or statements by former African employees evoking abuse and poor treatment from their

(11) Survey done in 2006.

Indian bosses. Although it is difficult to make stereotypes out of these judgments (this justified Amin Dada's expulsion measures), the socio-cultural confinement of Indians has been sufficiently documented by many researchers. It is thus unnecessary to rewrite everything in detail (also see O'Brien 1972: 27)¹². For example, Mittelman notes that:

"Asians and Africans interacted in the market place, but relations rarely extended beyond those of buyer-seller and master-servant. Their culture made the Asians a separate community; they were an exclusive and excluded minority. Their traditions of endogamy, restrictive social networks, and family firms sustained by loyalties of kinship contribution to intercommunal rivalries" (Mittelman 1975: 229).

In his research on this issue, Rohit Barot also emphasizes the social confinement of Indians:

"Although Bakuli is often regarded as an African area, social contact between Indians and Africans, apart from their brief encounters in shops, is non-existent. During my stay there was no single instance of an Indian knowing an African as an equal or a friend. Separation and distance between the two sides is a marked feature of life in Bakuli" (Barot 1975).

As noted by another author, divisive protection and the strict endogamous behavior were not exclusive to Indian communities in Uganda, but were and are still observable in other regions like Bradford (Great Britain), or Vancouver or Toronto where there is substantial immigration of Indian origin. "In any case, this was a unique emigration in that an entire community re-located itself lock, stock and barrel, to carry on pretty much as before" (Siddiqi 2002).

Indians and politics at Independence

The vicissitudes of the anti-colonial struggle and the prospects for independence were the source of inconvenience for the Indians in Uganda. They were thus the major target of the 1945 and 1949 riots during which several of them died. The result was that some Indians took advantage of the 1948 British law on nationality by soliciting acquisition of British passports. From 1962, however, the British legislation became more restrictive, designating birth and descent as the only criteria for automatic acquisition of citizenship. The aim was to regulate the immigration of Commonwealth citizens in Great Britain¹³. These

(12) About stereotypes, read Ocaya-Lakidi (1975: 95).

(13) After the Second World War, Britain needed manpower to restart its economy. Thus, the British Nationality Act of 1948 encouraged Commonwealth citizens to migrate to

protectionist measures came at a time when the number of applicants for emigration was increasing, thus proving accusations that Ugandan Indians could have behaved in a “non-citizen” manner. Stressing the fact that Indians were beneficiaries of colonial rule, independent Uganda political leaders gave Indians who were not Ugandan citizens up to two years to acquire Ugandan citizenship. However, only a minority of them agreed to respond to this proposal. According to census figures of 1969, only a third of Indians were Ugandan citizens (25,657 out of 74,308), while the remaining two thirds (48,651) were British, Indian or Pakistani passport holders (Mittelman 1975: 228). There is no doubt that the refusal by a large majority of Indians to acquire Ugandan citizenship increased their vulnerability at that time, creating a perception that they were not willing to belong to the new nation. Such an attitude was later undoubtedly used by some African political leaders as a pretext to justify the expropriation measures taken against “non-citizens holding significant positions in the national economy”.

As already mentioned, if the Indians were used by the colonial government to serve its political interests, it is only fair to note that some of them were in solidarity with Africans and participated actively in the country’s political activities. Sugraben Allidina Visram, Allidina Visram’s great grand-son’s wife, was for example, a National Legislative Council member as a representative of the Buganda Kingdom Kabaka Yekka (KY) party. Mr. Patel, a Ugandan Indian now retired in Australia, was the first speaker of the Ugandan Parliament. Other Indians such Bandali Sherali Jaffer and Allidina were councillors in the city of Kampala from the early sixties.

Expulsion and the return of Indians

As mentioned earlier, Uganda had about 75,000 Indians belonging to different religious and statutory communities before the expulsion of August 1972. Most of them were descendants (second or third generation) of pioneer Indians. The expulsion within 90 days was ordered by Idi Amin Dada. The subsequent settlement of Indians as refugees in host countries was a painful experience that left scars in the

the metropolis. After the availability of labour was deemed sufficient, the successive governments enacted laws on immigration in 1962 and 1968, introducing the criteria of “birth and descent” to acquire citizenship. Compounding restrictive measures of 1962, the 1968 Act allows for instant, entry in Great Britain only if that person has a parent or grandparent who was born or naturalized in Great Britain. These laws seek to regulate immigration of “non-British by blood”, such as Asians and Africans in the former colonies and protectorates (See Brown 1995, Hope 1997).

memories of families (see Mamdani, 1976). In 1997, expelled Indians who settled in the UK still commemorated the event's anniversary by celebrating a service at Westminster Abbey¹⁴. However, at the time of expulsion, a minority of about a hundred people decided to remain in the country. The testimony of some of them suggests that this tiny fraction of the old diaspora was not subjected to any animosity from the people¹⁵. Mr. Sharda Nandlal Karia, the head of Sanatan Dharma Mandal Temple, relates the following testimony:

"We had no problem of any kind after the majority left. There were no restrictions of any nature. We could travel and exchange money freely. The life was very good after the initial turmoil. There were no robberies or violence of any type. This is a proof that there was no racial hatred."¹⁶

While the influence exerted by Indians on the national economy was a reality in independent Uganda, their mass expulsion was a political populist measure since it gave a section of the new regime's social class access to certain business activities. While acknowledging the fact that some of the Africans beneficiaries made the most of the commercial operation, one of the expelled witnesses said that it was brutal and unjust and denounced its negative consequences (clear reduction of economic activities, rising corruption, etc.)¹⁷.

After the fall of Idi Amin, only a section of expelled Indians returned to Uganda. In the early 1980s their number grew up to about one thousand (Oonk 2004: 53)¹⁸. Having succeeded Idi Amin, Milton Obote's government did not commit itself on the return of the Indians, but had to face many external pressures from international donors, which imposed this measure as a condition of their financial support. With Yoweri Museveni coming to power in 1986, the return of Indians was confirmed. More Indians came back in 1993 after the government had guaranteed former property owners that the expropriated property would be returned to them (Asiimwe, 2007). Among the 22 people we interviewed, 10 returned to settle in Uganda between 1986 and 1995, and

(14) This is to thank the British for the welcome; this was during the meeting with President Yoweri Museveni, 25 years after expulsion. See *AsiansfromUganda.org*

(15) Interviews of April 2006. Babhubhai Ruparel and Sharda Nandlal Karia were determined not to abandon their *ancestral house* (Bhardwaj, 1994). Among the people we interviewed, two Ugandan Asians, Patel Ramji and Kripal Bansal are among the people who remained in Uganda during Amin Dada's dictatorship.

(16) *Hinduism Today*, December 1994.

(17) Abidi, interview on 4th May 2006.

(18) Also *Hinduism Today*, December 1994.

8 returned between 1995 and 2006¹⁹. On this occasion, several Kampala streets whose names had been changed reverted to their old names. For example, Nakivubo Street was renamed Swaminarayan Street²⁰.

It is now difficult to assess the current number of Indians on the Ugandan territory. This number has received several mismatched estimates though. In 2002, the Ugandan government census estimated the population of Indians in the country to be 8,818 people, broken down as follows:

- Rural areas: 944 (men: 569; women: 375)
- Urban Areas: 7,874 (men: 4682; women: 3,192)²¹.

According to the *Goanet News* newspaper, this figure was far less than the reality on the ground. In 2003, this newspaper proposed that people of Indian origin in Uganda were about 15,000²². This figure is almost exactly what our own informants²³ suggested. In line with this assessment, the population of the Indian community is currently about 20% of the total Indians before the expulsion. Regardless of the estimated resident population, immigration figures on arrival and departure from 2000 to 2004 also provide more information on trends as shown in Table 9.1 below:

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- (19) Among the 22 people interviewed, 10 came back between 1986 and 1995 and 8 from 1995 to 2006. In spite of protests from those who had benefited from the Indians' property during the preceding period, most Indians were able to repossess their property (survey done from March to May 2006).
- (20) Interview with Bhikhubhai Patel on 10th April 2006.
- (21) *Uganda Population and Housing Census 2002*, Kampala (2005: 51), Table B9.
- (22) Lacey, *Goanet News*, 2003.
- (23) According to our own informers, the total number of Indians in Uganda today could be between 13,000 and 15,000 people, with about 7,500 of them living in Kampala (interviews with Bhikhubhai Patel, 10th April 2006; Usha Jog, 3rd May 2006; Kalpesh Patel, 16th May 2006). Naren Metha, the chairman of the Indian association in Uganda thinks that the current number of Asians in Uganda is between 12,000 and 14,000. This is just an approximate figure given that the members of the diaspora are "scattered in the country and that in the past, there was no proper analysis of migration phenomena" (Naren Metha, Jinja road, 3rd May 2006). In this book, Laurent Nowik proposes a higher figure than 10,000 in 2001, which does not contradict our own estimations.

Table 9.1 Indians' arrival at and departure from Ugandan border points, 2000-2004

YEAR	SEX		TOTAL ARRIVALS	REASON				DURATION More than 30 days	TOTAL DEPARTURES	BALANCE OF ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES (e-l) (m)
	M	F		Holidays	Visiting friends	Business	Transit	Others		
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	(j)	(k)
2000	3,580	1,214	16	4,810	774	463	1,077	243	2,253	391
2001	3,492	1,093	1	4,586	1,107	486	865	332	1,796	321
2002	4,331	1,377	1	5,709	1,653	699	890	325	2,142	385
2003	5,260	1,353	26	6,639	1,543	1,034	1,072	293	2,697	561
2004	7,417	1,906	43	9,366	1,669	1,484	1,156	466	4,591	851
Five years' total	24,080	6,943	87	31,110	6,746	4,166	5,060	1,659	13,479	2,509
									26,675	4,435

Source: Migration and Tourist Report (1V), 2000-2004, Uganda Bureau of Statistics, August 2005, 27: 39-47.

With the exception of 2001 (the presidential elections year), the information in the table shows a growing movement of people as far as arrivals and departures are concerned. There is also a positive balance of arrivals for all five years (4,435 persons for a period of 5 years). In addition, the table shows a growth among the male population, which is a demographic characteristic common to all immigration situations.

It is a known fact that Ugandan Indians are members of several associations representing various communities. From the national allegiance perspective, these associations have a completely mixed character in that the distribution of citizenship identities widely corresponds to individual choice²⁴. Among the 22 people who responded to our questions, 14 (64%) are Indian citizens, 2 (9%) (are) British, 1 (5%) (is) Tanzanian, 1 (5%) Kenyan and 1 (5 %) Ugandan. However, it is important to note that 2 people (9%) describe their citizenship status as half Ugandan and half Indian. One of them explains: "Though I have an Indian passport, I am a Ugandan citizen by residence"²⁵. Another interviewee said that his political status is double, although it is not recognized in Uganda. Apparently, the citizenship distribution of the population sample we randomly interviewed reflects the overall distribution of the Indian population currently in Uganda.

The few Indians who remained in Uganda after the expulsion or those who returned to Uganda after the fall of the Amin regime often express their love for this country. Two of the 22 respondents came to Uganda between 1980 and 1985 under the Obote government. However, their willingness to settle there permanently has not yet been firmly established. The first one is a Tanzanian Indian businesswoman who, just like her family, was not expelled. The other one, Jos Almeida, is a retired teacher aged 71. He is a former teacher at the Lohana Academy in Kampala and his father arrived in Uganda in 1910. Born in Nsambya hospital in Kampala in 1924, Bandali Sherali Jaffer represents the third figure of return to the mother land. After studying in an Ismailia school in Kampala, he became a prominent member of the Kampala City Council, then Member of Parliament for Kampala West in 1962. After the expulsion of 1972, he resorted to farming in Canada. In 1981, just one year after the fall of Amin, Bandali Jaffer returned to his homeland. His six children do not understand why their father was so determined

(24) Thus, according to our informants, the 700 Hindu Patels or the 500 Ismaili Muslims only account for 25 Ugandan citizens in their ranks.

(25) Interview on 16th May 2006, Kira road.

to return to Uganda²⁶. But Jaffer is deeply committed to Uganda because it has links with his ancestors' history. According to the *Sunday* magazine known as the *Sunday Vision*, one of the Bugolobi hills in Kampala was named Bandali Rise in memory of a certain Bandali, whose son Sherali Jaffer Bandali was adopted by a Ugandan entrepreneur, Hajji Musa Kasule. Jaffer Bandali became prosperous. He built the Fairway Hotel and greatly contributed to the development of Muslim education, especially by fast tracking the construction of Muslim schools Nabisunsa and Kibuli²⁷. About his nostalgic attachment to Uganda, Sherali Jaffer Bandali says:

I was born there; I have my friends there, my African friends, all attachment to Uganda. And I like to be in Uganda and I might wish one day that I die in Uganda. I have got a very good business in Canada. I am one of the biggest poultry farmers in Canada. So money is not the problem. My poultry farm in Canada makes more money and gives me less headache.... My father came from India about 110 years ago.... He was not a rich man. He rode a bicycle from Kampala to Luwero, bought cotton and sold it in Kampala²⁸

The fact that certain Indians had property and had committed major investments in Uganda largely contributed to their return immediately after the fall of Idi Amin's government. This was of course what descendants of the main Ugandan Indian entrepreneurs did. Roni, Manubhai and Prataphbhai Madhvani, heirs to the Madhvani family or better still Alikhan and Amirali Karmali from Ali Mohamed Karmali's family (Mukwano's) returned to Uganda to reclaim their businesses. An evaluation done in 1993 estimated that less than 20% of the Indian property's value was still unclaimed and unreturned²⁹. This confirms that Indians owning property in the country came back to settle in large numbers. Conversely, indications are that the fraction of those who never returned to Uganda (80% of former residents) did not have much property in Uganda or escaped with it. Refusing to go back to Uganda can thus be explained by this fact, together with other already mentioned factors (trauma of the expulsion, feeling of insecurity on the part of non-Ugandan citizens, etc.). As for the expelled Indians who obtained citizenship of Western countries, most of them have better

(26) *The Weekly Observer*, 2, 4th-10th August 2005: 32-33.

(27) *Sunday Vision*, 12th December 2004.

(28) *The Weekly Observer*, 2, 4th-10th August 2005: 32-33.

(29) Gabiraani, *The New Vision*, 28th October 1993: 15. Other properties are still in the hands of Kampala City Council although they were officially returned to their owners.

living conditions than if they were to return to Uganda³⁰. In addition, one of the interviewees observed that most of the new generation born of expelled Indians has no feeling of attachment towards Uganda. Many of those who benefited from new opportunities abroad lost interest in their parents' affairs in Uganda or even deter them from returning³¹. This feeling often is shared by young people from families currently living in Uganda, but who are studying abroad.

Instead of former Indian residents, new immigrants, sometimes from other parts of India, are now trying their luck, taking advantage of a relative return to civil peace and the liberalized economic environment³². According to our informants, the majority of Indians currently in Uganda are "newcomers". This observation is confirmed by our direct investigation³³. Of the 22 people in our sample, only 2 (or their families) belong to the category of returnees while the remaining 20 (or their families) recently arrived in the country (91%). Most of these 20 are qualified young professionals who are aged between 20 and 40 years³⁴. Interviewed people are mixed: Indian citizens, British, Kenyans, Tanzanians and South Africans. Indian citizens mainly come from Gujarat though there are others from Maharashtra, Kerala or Hyderabad. Some have contacts with networks of Ugandan Indians who returned to India after deportation.

Resettlement of Indians

Being a year of economic recovery, 1993 represented a milestone for the return of Indians in Uganda. However, this return was marked by some controversies (Asiimwe, 2007). Indians were stakeholders in all industrial and commercial sectors, including the most modern ones (ICT, electronics, pharmaceuticals, distribution and other services). Due to this, they largely contributed to the resumption of economic activities and growth that was witnessed during the last decade of the 20th Century. After redeeming plantations and processing plants, they regained control of tea production (more than 50% from 1993)³⁵. From 1996, Indians' participation in the economy was 25% of the total foreign investments

(30) See Sherali Bandali Jaffer on this issue, *The Weekly Observer*, 4th -10th August 2005: 32.

(31) Interview with an Indian leader on 10th April 2006.

(32) There are also Chinese newcomers in the region.

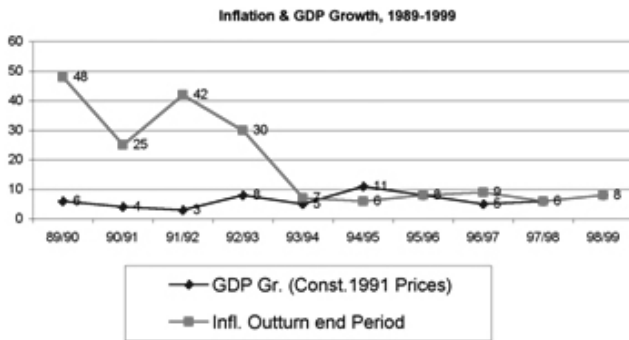
(33) Bikhu Patel, interview on 10th April 2006.

(34) Thirteen hold degrees in different fields like commerce, engineering, information science, medicine and arts, and two among them are holders of degrees equivalent to Masters.

(35) *The New Vision*, 21st October 1993: 24.

(\$ 500,000 out of \$ 2 million)³⁶. Since they employ a significant number of Africans, Ugandan Indian companies substantially contributed to the country's tax revenues. For example, Karmali's Mukwano, who are specialists in sugar production and employer of 10,000 people (8,000 of them in sugar cane plantations), paid 50 billion Uganda shillings to the Treasury in 2004. Among other major renowned Ugandan Indian companies include the following consortia: Manzul Alam, Karim Hirji's Dembe, Sudhir Ruparellia's Meera, Megha, Metha and Mukwano. Other Indians head companies of varying sizes in banking and insurance, tourism, imports and exports and, of course, the wholesale and retail³⁷.

Figure 9.1: Inflation & GDP Growth, 1989-1999



Perception of Indian newcomers and returnees about Uganda

Although some Indians who came back to resettle in Uganda are still traumatized by the experience of expulsion, most of them expressed their confidence in the future: "We cannot lament any longer about the past, Idi Amin and the suffering we endured", said one returnee. "We cannot change the past but we can build the future."³⁸

When Indians are asked about their feelings towards Africans, most respondents described Africans as being generally hospitable, friendly and courteous. In addition, Indians have a feeling of being at home in Uganda. They say that life in Uganda is full of amenities, comfortable and interesting. The country itself is described as peaceful, safe, and

(36) *Migration News*, March 1996. Another estimation establishes that the share of Indians in business is 625 million dollars, which is a third of the total foreign investments (See Abidi 1996: 57).

(37) For more information, see *The New Vision*, 15th August 2005: 31-35.

(38) A statement by an Indian leader on 3rd May 2006. Most holders of foreign passports whom we interviewed expressed the wish to become Ugandan citizens (14 out of 22).

potentially rich. They particularly thanked the government for its “hospitality”.

Secondly, however, Indians – or at least some of them – are having some cause of discontent, even if they are frequently relegated to the background. A primary cause of dissatisfaction is the difficulty in obtaining Ugandan citizenship, a situation that makes them have a sense of insecurity, particularly due to potential threats of expropriation³⁹.

Another cause of resentment is the behavior of some Africans (especially the police or government officials) who are criticized for alleged harassment or discrimination. Many people report being occasionally subjected to insults from passersby or from *boda boda* riders (motorcycle taxis). “I was surprised when they once yelled insults at me,” says an Indian immigrant. “You, *Muyindi*, why are you here? Return to your country.” The same immigrant says that Tanzanians are, among all East Africans, the friendliest in East Africa, although Ugandans are the most generous⁴⁰. Asked the same question, another woman confirms occasional occurrences of aggressive behavior from some Africans:

Some *boda boda* cyclists hurl insults at us as we pass-by. Can you imagine every day! They threaten that Amin or another form of Amin is about to sprout and evict us from Uganda. They say we congest all their social services including schools.⁴¹

Boda boda riders and taxi drivers are known for their abuse and even insults. However, such comments may also reflect hidden and repressed feelings from the African population in general. Furthermore, these feelings may tend to increase with time. “On the face of it, people are very friendly towards us, but we must recognize that since recently, the situation has changed. Some think that Indians will rule Uganda in the future, which is not the case!”⁴² According to someone else, Africans claim that “(...) our presence is the cause of unemployment, rising taxes, unequal investment opportunities... I do not agree with this point of view at all! I think it depends on individual efforts.” However, one of the interviewees acknowledged that “there are unequal opportunities for investment, particularly in sectors where Indians have monopoly of almost everything. The government should put a ceiling on the number of private investments so as to give an opportunity not only to Africans,

(39) Summary of responses obtained during different interviews. *Muyindi*: local variant of the Swahili term *muhindi*: “Indian”.

(40) Interview on 3rd May 2006.

(41) Interview n° 13 KSB 5 (Appendix 2), 28th April 2006.

(42) Interview n° 18 (Appendix 2), 27th April 2006.

but also to Indians with limited means.”⁴³ The last interviewee said that resentment against Indians is not based on ethnic prejudice, but on class rather:

There is resentment (against the Indians) among the uneducated African masses. This is however not the case among the educated classes. Educated Africans are receptive, attentive and are willing to work with us and even share our points of view⁴⁴.

Regarding the treatment of Indians by Ugandan government officials, two interviewees reported the existence of inequalities between citizens and immigrants. “We are punished for minor mistakes while Ugandan citizens were not, it’s not fair!”⁴⁵ Violations of traffic laws are used by police as a pretext for “arresting and getting money out of us, while Africans are not bothered.”⁴⁶ Others complain about tax administration. One Indian said that “when it comes to paying taxes, Africans are favoured! I know wealthy Africans who are exempted from tax ...”⁴⁷ Others cite corruption opportunities arising from excessively complicated procedures or harassment by police and immigration officials when it comes to getting work permits.

Sometimes the police can stop and ask for graduated tax tickets, may be to look for an opportunity of pinning you down. No work permit, no citizenship, every year they are promising and nothing is coming. Then the enforcing personnel take advantage of demanding some money from this *Muyindi* who they think ‘have their pockets full of dollars’⁴⁸. All the time *chai chai*⁴⁹, yet when Ugandans make the same mistakes they let them free. I am not saying that it is serious, not at all, really no problem, in fact it is not necessarily harassment, but when sometimes the traffic police or immigration stop and ask this and that which they do not ask citizens, it can be unfair yet everything else is so good. There is need for a clear policy on citizenship; for instance, I would like to be a citizen. I spend most of my earnings here, I pay rent, utilities, taxes, maintain my car here, thus hardly save to take money to India.⁵⁰

Due to the weaknesses of the Ugandan administration, corruption is widespread. Foreigners easily fall victim to this corruption, especially from police, judiciary, revenue authorities, customs, and social affairs.

(43) Interview n° 14 (Appendix 2), 28th April 2006.

(44) Interview n° 4, KP (Appendix 2), 16th May 2006.

(45) Interview n° 9, SK, (Appendix 2), 29th April 2006.

(46) Interview n° 3, Kololo, 3rd May 2006.

(47) Interview n° 7, Lugogo, 29th April 2006.

(48) *Wahindi*, plural of *Muhindi* in standard Swahili.

(49) *Chai* means “tea”, an euphemism that refers to petty bribes.

(50) Interview n° 11, GK (Appendix 2), 29th April 2006.

It is easier for officers to ask more money from foreigners than the one required⁵¹.

Social and religious organisation among Ugandan Indians

The Indian social organization is complex. It is known that the caste system once governed the whole of the Indian society, regardless of religious affiliation; being a member meant strict specialization in accordance with predetermined standards of division of labour. Today, such specialization is no longer a must in Uganda, even though members of former castes have often preserved their activities. In contrast, the statutory hierarchy has been widely maintained, especially in marital matters where the marriage rule is still based on caste endogamy and religious endogamy. This excludes intermarriage with Africans.

From the religious affiliation point of view, Ugandan Indians are divided into two main groups: Hindus (majority) and Muslims. Other small religious groups are also represented: Sikhs, Roman Catholics and Parsis. Although a small section of the original Hindu community resettled in the country, its number has risen in recent years, and according to our informants, it was about 7000 people in 2006⁵². Two splinter groups, the Swaminayan and Jains play a major economic and social role⁵³ alongside orthodox Hindus. Meanwhile, Muslims are divided between Sunni (majority) and Shia, among them the Ismailia (about 500 people in 2006), who have a special status due to the role they play in the country's economy⁵⁴ as previously pointed out. As mentioned above, a small minority group, the Ahmadiyya, was recently reconstituted after marking its presence in Uganda in the last fifty years⁵⁵.

(51) An interview with an Indian manager (A) on 3rd May 2006.

(52) According to *Hinduism today*, the number of Hindus was not over 2500 people in 1994 (*Hinduism today*, December 1994 and an interview with Bhikhubhai Patel, 10th April 2006). Their number has since grown highly. 12 out of 22 people in our sample (55%) belong to the Hindu community.

(53) The Swaminayan have temples in Kampala, Jinja, Tororo, Mbarara and Gulu. With a small group of 155 people, the Jains have two temples in Kampala (interview with Ketan Shah, 26th May 2006).

(54) Other communities have less social and economic importance. The Shia Bohras are represented by Dawod Bohora Jamaat while Ithnasheri Shia are represented by Khoja Shia Ithnasheri Jamat. Sikhs are mostly in the Ramgarhia Sikh Society. Let's note anecdotally that Sikhs riding a motorcycle always complain about the obligation of wearing a helmet because they are forced to remove their traditional turbans. Originally from Goa, Catholics formed an association called the Indian Catholic Community.

(55) The Ahmadiyya (Jamaat) is a Muslim messianic belief that emerged in India in the late 19th century. It now has about ten million followers scattered around the world (Pakistan, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, etc.) and a few thousand followers in East Africa (Adamson 1989, Hammann 1994). After its expulsion in 1972, the Ahmadiyya community was resettled

Table 9.2 Other Indian community associations in Uganda

Associations
Andhra cultural association (Hindus)
Shri Akhil Uganda Brahma Samaj (Hindus)
Bengali association (regional association)
Bhatia Samaj (Hindus)
Kutchi Bhatia Samaj (Hindus)
Hare Krishna Temple (ISKCON)
Jain Samaj (Jains)
Kalashree (Hindus)
Kerala Samajam (regional Christian association)
Karnataka association (regional association)
Lohana Community (Hindus)
Maharashtra Mandal (regional association)
Pillav Group (Hindus)
Patidar Samaj (Hindus)
Patidar Shishu Kunj (Hindus)
Punjabi Cultural Society (regional association)
Shree Kutch Satsang Swaminarayan Temple (Reformist Hindus)
S. S.D.M, Sanatam Darhma Temple (Hindus)
Sindhi Association of Uganda (regional association)
Shree Swaminiriyam Mandal
Shree Akshar Puroshottam Swaminarayan Sanstha
Surat District (regional association)
Tamil Sangam (regional association)
World Malayalee Council, Africa (regional association)

Source: Author's research; data collected in March-April 2006.

Many members of the diaspora, with or without Indian citizenship, assemble in the *Indian Association of Uganda*, an umbrella religious

in Uganda, led by a group of around ten imams from Pakistan. Currently, the Ahmadiyya have places of worship in Wandegaya (Kampala), and Mukono, Mbiko, Jinja, Kamuli, Kayunga, Masaka, Iganga and Mbarara. The community also has a secondary school in Wandegaya and a hospital in Mbale. It plans to establish more schools and health centers in the country (interview with Mr Nafi, secretary of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission on 27th March 2006).

and community associations that was founded in 1922. Every year, this association celebrates “Indian Day”. Although most Indians who were interviewed still have contacts with India through periodic visits, family visits or business relationships, all of them show no particular attachment to that country. This is particularly the case with those born in East Africa⁵⁶.

Indian residential pattern in Uganda

Because of their cultural differences, and for safety reasons, Indian communities tend to cluster themselves in separate residential areas. This situation has virtually not changed since the beginning of the colonial era. Kampala city has the largest number of the diaspora representatives, about 7500 people (probably more than half the total number of residents in reference to the above mentioned figures). While the African middle and upper classes are generally reluctant to live in the city centre (because it is unfriendly to large families), Indians returned to their former favourite neighbourhoods of Kampala (Apollo Kaggwa and Buganda Road) or reoccupied buildings corresponding to their former commercial establishments in central Kampala (Bombo Road, Jinja Road, William Street and Martin Road). Another group of Indians that was economically more modest opted for suburbs served by major roads as this guaranteed security – which explains why such suburbs were sought by the middle classes. That is the case of Bukoto National Housing Flats where former African tenants were financially induced to vacate in order to make way for Indian occupants who were willing to come together in adjoining dwellings⁵⁷. Other residential areas popular with Indians are Kamwokya (Kisementi), Nagulu and Lugogo Bye-pass. As for the richest Indians, they have usually chosen the up market residential areas like Kololo, Nakasero, Muyenga, Kabalagala and Ntinda.

While former Indian residential areas (urban or rural) were occupied by Africans in the wake of expulsion, some of the former owners preferred asking for financial compensation rather than returning there. However, other owners (some of them now living in Europe or

(56) Born in Mombasa and being a holder of a British passport, one of them said: “Yes, my family is from India. But I live in Uganda and none of our family members live in India anymore, the family is scattered between Great Britain and East Africa. I’m more at home here in Uganda than in India.” Statement by Mr. Shah, Bombo Road, 26th May 2006.

(57) Several Indian families anxious to live in neighbouring apartments come together to offer compensation to African occupants, encouraging them to relocate or exchange their homes.

America), repossessed their properties either to let or sell them to other Indians.

Indians in social and political arenas

Just like in other East African countries, all observers agree that Indians in Uganda are aloof to national politics (Shah 2004). However, the Indian community – especially through the *Indian Association of Uganda* – never fails to intervene at the political level when it comes to defending its interests⁵⁸. In addition, many Indians who resettled in Uganda locally participate in social activities and even in local politics, indicating that their perception of Africans has changed. During his visit to Uganda, the spiritual leader of the Swaminarayan movement encouraged followers to live and work with Africans⁵⁹.

Furthermore, some Indians regionally participate in traditional government bodies. These bodies have been held in place by the government of independent Uganda. Thus, in the reshuffle of his cabinet in 2004, the Kabaka (king of Buganda) has named two Indians to cabinet posts (Muhamood Thobani, Minister for Economic Planning and Investment and Rajni Taylor, Deputy Minister)⁶⁰. Other elective offices in regional, corporate or even national bodies were recently assigned to Ugandan Indians⁶¹. During the 2006 parliamentary elections, another Ugandan of Indian origin, Tanna Sanjay, was elected Member of Parliament for Tororo Municipality. This set of facts shows a positive trend in social and political integration as well as progress made in the domain of friendly coexistence among communities.

The socially closed nature of the Indian community is generally attributed to deep cultural difference between Indians and Africans. As underlined by one respondent, “Given that Indians and Africans have very different cultural norms, it is rather difficult for me to

(58) The articles of association state that its purpose is in particular “to promote economic and social cultural relations among all people of Indian origin and secondly, between themselves and the people of Uganda”.

(59) *The New Vision*, 9(19), 24th January 1994: 2.

(60) Born in Buganda, Rajni Taylor is the former chairman of the Indian Association of Uganda. On his part, Mr. Manu Kanaani was named in the royal parliament (Lukiiko); *The Monitor*, 26th January 2004.

(61) This is the case of one of the county seats in Kampala (Kampala Central) won by Mr. Karia (*Independent* 26th August 2005). In addition, Mr Abid Alam was elected chairman of the Uganda Manufacturers Association. A few years ago, Jay Tanna, a Nile Breweries distributor, aged 24, won a parliamentary seat representing youth during the election that pitted him against an African representative. He was forced to resign after the validity of his identity papers had been challenged. Jay Tanna was later killed in India in a car accident (*The New Vision*, 16th June 2001).

participate spontaneously in most African social activities, and the same is true for Africans. Moreover, it must be acknowledged that we Indians are free to behave as we wish.”⁶² While some Indian children from wealthy families are studying in good schools in the company of African children, most Indian parents tend to prefer sending their children to community schools such as the Ismailia schools. There are several community schools in Kampala, the most famous being the Aga Khan Academy (Ismailia), the Lohana Academy (Hindu), the Multitec Academy (Multireligious) and Ramgarhia Sikh School (Sikh). From a certain level, the children go to study in India or in a Western country. These practices stand in the way of Indians’ successful integration in the Ugandan society. To justify this fact, one of the interviewees argued that educational levels in India are higher and that the Indian government encourages admission of foreign children⁶³. Another argument is that, in the absence of citizenship status – a situation that undermines their future – families are encouraged to maintain contacts with a foreign country⁶⁴. Admittedly, Indians who live far from urban centres send their children to the same schools as Africans.

One of the consecutive observations of our survey is that Indians with Ugandan citizenship (mainly returnees from 1972 and residents for several generations) are more relaxed, confident and friendly towards Africans than Indians who recently arrived in Uganda. The said recent immigrants show indifference, reservation and even apprehension. This difference is explained by the uncertainty of their residency status and perhaps by memories of bad experiences with police. In respect to their relations with Africans, old Indian Ugandans belonging to the category of returnees gladly give advice to Indian newcomers:

We tell them to socialise, to make friends and attend Local Council meetings...we don’t want the gap...When an Asian goes to a particular town, there is anxiety among the local people as they fear that he is going to push them out of business. So we guide them to venture into something new so as not to block the opportunities of the locals. They can concentrate on wholesale and leave the distribution to the local people so that they can also earn from it⁶⁵

Old Indian Ugandans have also become more aware of the positive development of their relations with Africans, suggesting that they have

(62) Interview n° 2, Kampala’s industrial area, 3rd May 2006.

(63) Interview n° 3, 3rd May 2006.

(64) *The Independent*, 26th August 2005.

(65) Interview with a Swaminarayan manager, 10th April 2006.

somehow learnt a lesson from their expulsion. On this issue, Mahmood Hudda talks of the “unacceptable conditions” in which his family treated their African house help: “The way in which the older generation asked for a cup of tea is completely different from our children ... These ones ask: ‘Could I have a cup of tea please’ – instead of asking the way my family used to do: ‘Bring me some tea.’ Today, older Indians frequently put the younger ones in trouble because they do not know any other way of asking.”⁶⁶

Although some Africans do not fail to criticize Indians for being opportunists, Indian returnees, through their many associations, are also involved in many activities and charities. This is usually in collaboration with Africans or for the latter’s benefit. Some African Indian individuals or organizations have established schools, hospitals and other social services. They often distribute food, make regular donations of medical equipment, provide assistance to widows and offer scholarships to need African students.⁶⁷

Conclusion

Having been present for centuries in Eastern Africa, Indians were used by the British as auxiliaries of the colonial system. They largely contributed to the success of the contemporary Ugandan economy while ensuring their economic and social growth. They are a powerful minority group whose identity is special. Due to this, their integration into the Ugandan society is far from being accomplished, despite the cruel experience of expulsion in 1972. This objective, which determines the future of

(66) Mahmood Hudda, *The Hindu*, 12th April 2004.

(67) Different interviews: Metha, Jinja Road, 3rd May 2006; Abidi, Makerere University, 4th May 2006; Usha Jog, Kololo, 3rd May 2006. About fifteen years ago, a fundraising during the campaign “Help to fight against AIDS” was launched during a visit by young Indians in Uganda and this provided an opportunity for Indians and Africans to work together towards a common cause (*The New Vision*, 8 (113), 15th May 1993). Charity organizations include the Muljibhai Madhvani’s Scholarship Foundation Scheme that helps students from poor families gain access to university. In 2005, the foundation offered 93 university scholarships. In 2006, 400 million shillings was earmarked for the university scholarship program (*The New Vision*, 5th December 2005, *The Daily Monitor*, 21st June 2006: 7). More recently, the Indian Association Kerala Samajam Uganda (KSU) donated 40 million shillings for the people of Northern Uganda affected by civil war (*The Daily Monitor*, 24th October 2005). Belonging to the Shia Ithnasheri community (Khoja Shia Ithnasheri Jamat), the Jaffery Centre in Rubaga distributes food and clothing. Its manager, who is Kenyan-born, says that he really appreciates associating with Ugandans (interview on 20th May 2006). Other associations such as the Kalashree association organize lotteries for orphaned children.

their relations with the society at large, remains an important issue for Uganda in the next decade.

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Appendix

Table 9.3 List of Uganda's top 100 taxpayers in 2003-2004

Position	Taxpayer	Ownership	Activity	Value (USHS)
1	Shell Uganda Ltd.	Multinational	Oil	78, 746, 693, 437
2	MTN Uganda Ltd	Multinational (South Africa)	Telecommunications	75, 881, 639, 815
3	Uganda Breweries LTD*	Multinational (Kenya)	Brewing industry	60, 578, 174, 614
4	Total (U) Ltd.	Multinational	Oil	54, 117, 235, 548
5	Caltex Oil (U) Ltd	Multinational	Oil	46, 333, 840, 771

Position	Taxpayer	Ownership	Activity	Value (USHS)
6	British American Tobacco (U)	Multinational	Cigarettes	45, 216, 636, 207
7	Nile Breweries Ltd	Indian (Madhivan)	Brewing industry	38, 881, 356, 624
8	Century Bottling Co. Ltd.	Multinational (USA)	Coca Cola	29, 865, 388,402
9	Kobil Uganda Ltd	Multinational	Oil	28, 732, 288,826
10	Gapco (U) Ltd	Indian	Oil	26, 769, 166,845
11	Petro Uganda Ltd	Multinational	Oil	24, 597, 946,757
12	Tororo Cement Industries Ltd*	Indian	Cement	21, 359, 785,638
13	Stanbic Bank	Multinational (South African)	Banking	20, 028, 449,310
14	Hima Cement Ltd	Indian	Cement	17, 734, 150,981
15	Standard Chartered Bank (U)	Multinational (USA)	Banking	16, 919, 705,968
16	Uganda Electricity Distribution	Multinational (South African)	Electricity distribution	16, 855, 642,555
17	E.C.S. Naro	Government	-----	15, 672, 172,017
18	Kakira Sugar Works*	Indian (Madhivan)	Sugar	15, 091, 772,980
19	A.K. Oil & Fats Ltd*	Indian (Mukwano)	Food industry	14, 543, 262,861
20	KPMG Peat Marwick	Multinational (Kenya)	Auditors & Consultants	13, 769, 919,132
21	Ministry of Energy	Government	-----	10, 412, 171,396
22	Barclays Bank (U)	Multinational (GB)	Banking	10,040, 974, 754
23	Petrocity Enterprises (U)	Multinational	Oil	9, 392, 901, 675

Position	Taxpayer	Ownership	Activity	Value (USHS)
24	Hared Petroleum Ltd.	Multinational	Oil	9,333,117,624
25	URA	Government	-----	9,157,595,402
26	Kinyara Sugar Works	Joint: Government/ Britain	Sugar	8,865,325,722
27	Sugar Corp. of Uganda* Ltd (SCOUL)*	Indian (Metha)	Sugar	8,144,979,734
28	Mukwano Industries (U) Ltd	Indian	Mechanics	7,847,963,465
29	Blood Transfusion Service	Government	-----	7,342,960,082
30	Unilever Uganda Limited	Multinational (GB)	Equipment	7,091,687,110
31	Faculty Arts, A/C Victoria Mtrs	Government	-----	6,382,493,427
32	Nat. Water & Sewage Corp.	Government	-----	6,264,433,187
33	Companies in Liquidation	Government BOU	Banking	5,789,304,567
34	Allied Healthy Prof Council	Multinational	Health/ pharmaceuticals	5,617,324,426
35	Uganda Baati Ltd*	Indian	Steel manufacturers	5,541,578,672
36	Uganda Electricity Transmission Co. Ltd	Multinational (South Africa)	Electricity transmission	5,502,681,040
37	National Plan. Auth. A/C The New Vision	Government	-----	5,342,861,313
38	Jovenna	Multinational (South Africa)	Oil	5,334,387,457
39	Britania Allied Industries*	Indian	Bricks	5,309,688,118

Position	Taxpayer	Ownership	Activity	Value (USHS)
40	Leaf Tobacco & Commodities	Multinational	Cigarettes	5,295,934,832
41	Centenary Bank – Entebbe Rd	Church/ German Association	Banking	5,124,797,045
42	Citi Bank -2	Multinational (USA)	Banking	4,920,651,931
43	Roko Construction Ltd	Multinational	Construction	4,840,471,371
44	Delta Petroleum Limited	Multinational	Oil	4,495,316,605
45	Chief Mechanical Eng. A/C K.L Gen Suppliers	Multinational		4,473,108,722
46	Bank of Baroda Ltd *	Indian	Banking	4,325,686,911
47	ARTP II Local A/C Aettri A/C City Tyres	Multinational	Tyres	4,270,744,185
48	Civil Aviation Authority	Government	-----	4,185,621,418
49	Stanbic Bank (U) Ltd	Multinational (South Africa)	Banking	4,112,398,877
50	DHL	Multinational	International courier	4,101,024,536
51	Kampala Sheraton Hotel	Joint: Government/ Multinational	Hotel	4,011,630,579
52	Hashi Empex Ltd	Multinational	Oil	3,908,117,573
53	Agro Value Processors Impex (U)	Multinational (Canada)	Imports of second hand clothes	3,859,910,743
54	Abdul Kadeer Hakimuddi *	Indian		3,844,277,266
55	Uganda Telecom Ltd.	Multinational	Telecomm	3,698,268,611

Position	Taxpayer	Ownership	Activity	Value (USHS)
56	Mgs International (U)	Multinational (USA)	Imports of machines	3,652,014,248
57	E. African Portland Cement	Multinational (Kenya)	Imports of cement	3,553,217,663
58	Comp. of Records A/C Safali Expedition	Indian (Mukwano)	Hotel& Tourism	3,467,040,483
59	DFCU Leasing Company Ltd IFC (US) German; Great Britain & Ug. Dev. Corp.	Multinational	Banking	3,442,201,486
60	Panyahululu Company Ltd.	Multinational (China)	Pharmaceuticals	3,376,635,059
61	Petro Link	Multinational	Oil	3,295,859,900
62	Celtel (U) Ltd	Multinational	Telecomm	3,281,815,405
63	Fuelex (U) Ltd	Multinational	Oil	3,149,749,067
64	Bank of Uganda (BOU)	Government		3,008,038,648
65	Rd Agency Formation A/C Spencon Services*	Indian	Construction	2,979,197,399
66	Crown Beverages Ltd.	Joint (A. Nzei (local) / South Africa)	Pepsi Cola	2,972,930,863
67	Yusta Limited	Multinational	Oil	2,962,882,644
68	Engen Uganda Limited	Multinational (South Africa)	Oil	2,960,624,153
69	Dembe Trad. Enterprises *	Indian (Karim)	Diverse activities	2,935,019,081
70	World Wide Movers (U) Ltd	Multinational	Clearing and transport services	2,884,338,194

Position	Taxpayer	Ownership	Activity	Value (USHS)
71	Motorcare U Ltd	Multinational (Great Britain)	Vehicle imports (Nissan)	2,813,531,031
72	Eskom A/C Mare Johann Paul	Multinational (South Africa)	Energy production	2,768,922,696
73	White Showmans Ltd*	Multinational (Great Britain/Uganda)		2,634,611,322
74	DFCU Bank Ltd	Indian	Banking	2,627,986,598
75	Kimuli Henry	Loc. Uganda		2,538,090,564
76	Mansons Uganda Ltd*	Joint Kenya/Uganda	Aluminium & metals	2,496,303,653
77	Translink (U) Ltd	Indian		2,448,202,045
78	Nile Bank Ltd	Loc. Uganda	Banking	2,435,556,805
79	Shoprite Checkers (U) Ltd.	Multinational (South Africa)	Supermarkets	2,389,769,853
80	A.K. Plastics (Mukwano)*	Indian	Plastics	2,315,916,461
81	Startex Co. Ltd	Multinational (Pakistan)	Pharmaceuticals	2,304,705,312
82	NSSF	Government	-----	2,235,838,763
83	Muljibhai Madvani Co.*	Indian	Diverse activities	2,151,657,420
84	Multichoice Uganda Ltd	Multinational	Cables & television	2,069,868,002
85	Bulamu Bwebugagga	Loc Uganda	Different products	2,029,037,948
86	Yuan Shi Investments (U)*	Indian	Vehicle imports	2,009,891,029
87	Picfare Industries Ltd.*	Indian (Madvani)	Paper manufacturers	
	2,006,293,028			
88	Transpaper Ltd.	Multinational (Kenya)	General supplier	1,969,617,132

Position	Taxpayer	Ownership	Activity	Value (USHS)
89	Chatha Invest. U Ltd*	Indian	Vehicle imports	1,961,647,745
90	Sadolin Paints Ltd.	Multinational (GB)	Paint manufacturers	1,933,940,533
91	Crane Bank Ltd.	Indian (Sudhir)	Banking	1,917,681,652
92	Bata Shoe Co. Ltd.*	Indian	Shoe manufacturers	1,915,171,745
93	Masumin Textiles Corp. Ltd.*	Indian	Textile manufacturers	1,901,785,246
94	E. African Glass Works*	Indian (Metha)	Glass manufacturers	1,901,005,480
95	Capacity Building	Government	-----	1,898,040,246
96	Housing Finance Co.	Government. (NHCC&NSSF)	Credit	1,864,732,130
97	Vision Impex Ltd.	Multinational		1,858,356,179
98	Shell Malindi (U) Ltd.	Multinational	Oil	1,856,436,712
99	Euroflex Ltd.	Multinational (GB)		1,856,174,121
100	Toro Mityana Tea Co. Ltd	Multinational (Mitch. Cotts) (GB)	Tea planting	1,840,136,704

Sources : URA (Uganda Revenue Authority) and the author's research

The Minorities of Indian Origin in Tanzania

Simeon MESAKI and Fatima G. BAPUMIA

Historical background

Indians were part of Tanzanian society long before Tanzania appeared on the world map as a nation in the 1960s. For centuries, trade between the Indian continent and East Africa was controlled by the pace of the monsoon winds and was at times dangerous for tradesmen. The main trade items that were transported by dhows included cotton fabrics, ivory and spices. Before Arabs occupied the East African Coast where they introduced a new architecture by constructing strong towns and mosques, most Indian traders had a few temporary establishments in African ports. However, if the great sailor Vasco da Gama is to be believed, it is possible that there was a large number of Indians in the two towns of Mombasa and Malindi.

When Zanzibar became the capital of Oman in 1832, many Indians who were living in Muscat followed Sultan Seyyid Said to Zanzibar where they benefited from his protection. Indians were appointed to key administrative positions like port captains and heads of customs. Once again, Indian communities, especially those that had acquired British citizenship, benefited a lot after the arrival of the British in East Africa. A trade agreement between Seyyid Said and the British gave Indians the right to live in Zanzibar and trade under the protection of the sultan. With the establishment of a British consulate, the number of traders

from the Indian subcontinent grew progressively from 2,500 in 1870 to 6,000 in the beginning of 1900.

Since Hindus were subjected to a religious commandment that prohibited them from crossing oceans, most Indian traders were initially of Muslim faith, mainly the Shia Khoja and the Ithnasheri. Africa was considered an “unholy” and a “dirty” place by Hindus of higher castes. Due to this, they thought that their wives would be better protected if they remained in India to take care of their homes, children and family property. In general, unmarried Hindus who went to Africa usually went back to India to marry, after which they left their wives in India as they frequently travelled to Zanzibar. All the same, it seems that a small number of Indian women settled in East Africa for some years before returning to their mother country to deliver their first baby and remained there to raise children. Being concerned with this situation, the second sultan of Zanzibar, Seyyid Bargash, urged Hindus to bring their wives. It is reported that the Sultan sent his personal ship to welcome the first Hindu woman to Zanzibar, to whom he gave some amount of money. His plan was to welcome Hindu women to the old fort town after installing water pipes and silver taps. This was a double guarantee that no woman would appear in public and would not be exposed to the risks of pollution. While certain Hindu traders in Gujarat were protesting against the prohibition of crossing the oceans in front of the Brahmanes, this encouraged a growing number of Indians towards African coasts (Oonk 2005; Singh 2003). At the same time, Goan colonists also went to Zanzibar as cooks, merchants and clerks.

With the establishment of the German East African colony in 1885, some Zanzibar Indians settled on the mainland, while others came directly from India to work on the railway construction. Since they were not recognized as British citizens by the German colonial administration, these Indian newcomers were subjected to harsh treatment just like Africans and had to wait for the British protectorate, at the end of the First World War for their economic and social status to improve. In the beginning, Indians were ranked third after Europeans and Arabs because they were managers of small shops (*dukawallah*). However, business relationships that took place within the transoceanic “Indian network” between retailers, wholesalers, importers, exporters and seamen – sometimes belonging to the same religious community – represented a significant advantage over Swahili and Arab competitors (Oonk, 2005). Merchants from Gujarat, Kutch, Kathiawar and from other parts of western India, including Goan house helps and Punjabi artisans,

were useful to imperial mechanics as middlemen and skilled workers in colonial Tanganyika. Although all these immigrants never exceeded one percent of the colony's total population, their role in the economy of the territory was of prime importance and benefited from the colonial administration's continued support, which favoured Indians against Africans in terms of trade and access to property. Racial segregation was thus established between Africans, Arabs, Indians and Europeans and it transcended all the important divisions between languages, religions, castes and social classes. The various *mandir*, *khana*, *wadi*, *jamaat*, mosques and other religious buildings belonging to the Patels, Lohanas, Ithnasheri, Ismailis, Bohras, Sikhs and Goans grew almost without interference with "foreigners". The trend continued even after the independence of Tanganyika in 1961.

During the Zanzibar revolution of 1964, over 10,000 Indians were forced to take refuge on the mainland because of violent attacks of which they themselves and Arabs were victims. Most of them settled in Dar es Salaam and there continued their business activities until the implementation of the "Africanization" policy adopted by the new socialist government of Julius K. Nyerere. The Acquisition Act of 1971 had a severe impact on the entire Indian community (Singh 2003). Many Indians then took the option of a new migration, mainly towards the United Kingdom. However, an *ad hoc* legislation was hastily created in the United Kingdom by the government of Harold Wilson to contain the flood of immigrants from East Africa. Other Indians found refuge in Canada and the United States.

The liberalization of the economy in the 1990s led to a new influx of Indian traders in Tanzania, mostly relatives of a few thousand traders and teachers who had remained in the country after the political upheavals that led to independence. Taking advantage of new economic opportunities, these new immigrants made life difficult for African entrepreneurs by having networks with corrupt politicians. Being isolated from the African population, they tried to keep their religion and culture intact. Indian Muslims also isolated themselves from Africans. Even contacts with Africans of the same faith were limited, especially with regard to marriage.

In addition, two other recent technical and political changes brought to light the behaviour of Indian communities in Tanzania and helped to reactivate their Indian-ness. While for some families, the attachment with the motherland was weakened over several generations, the spread of mass media and new means of communication (email, internet) had

an effect of “reconnecting” the Indian diaspora with India. While the videos and music from Bollywood were sold worldwide, there were now many Internet sites where the Indian diaspora could share their views, discuss politics and return virtually to the “motherland”. Secondly, against the current and the previous policy of indifference towards “Indians Overseas”, the Indian government in September 2000 adopted a new policy and regulatory framework to strengthen the links between the Indian diaspora and the metropolis. This change in attitude, however, was not unanimous and did not necessarily lead to stronger economic ties with India because many businessmen in the diaspora approached business from a global business perspective by focusing on relationships with other countries (Britain, Japan, etc.), while at the same time voluntarily maligning their Indian correspondents, especially Gujaratis.

A brief overview of communities of Indian origin in Tanzania

The people of Indian origin living in Tanzania can be classified according to their place of origin in India, religion and social status. Just like in other East African countries, Indians in Tanzania are mostly from the North-Western part of India (Gujarat and Punjab, and secondarily from Maharashtra and Goa). The majority of them are Hindus (orthodox and schismatic). However, Muslims account for more than 40% and there is also a small minority of Goan Catholics. Other religious communities are also represented, particularly the Sikhs (known locally as the Sing Sing) and some ultra-minority religions such as Buddhists, Zoroastrians (Parsis) and Pentecostal Christians.

Indian Muslims are divided between Sunni and Shia. The Sunni are divided into five or six socio-professional and socio-regional communities derived from the old Hindu castes (Kokni, Memon, Cutch, Kumbhar, Hajjam, etc.). Other Sunni are represented by the Kadian or Wahab from Pakistan while Shia Muslims comprise the Ithnasheri (Shia orthodox), or the Khoja, Ismailis and Bohras.

Most Tanzanian Indians speak Gujarati, which also became the commercial language between members of the diaspora. In colonial times, Gujarati was an optional subject in schools in addition to English, Swahili and French. Other indigenous languages are also still used at the family level: Cutchi (a subgroup of Gujarat), Punjabi, Urdu, Konkani, Dalda, Goan. In addition, some immigrants know Hindi, which is a language of wider communication and one of the official languages of India. It is interesting to note that Gujarat has incorporated a few

Swahili words such as *kabat* for *kabati* (cupboard), *madaf* for *madafu* (coconut) and *fagyo* for *fagio* (broom). It is also noteworthy that most Indians do not speak Swahili within their families, reserving its use for contacts with Africans.

As far as its constitution is concerned, Tanzania is a secular state. To this effect, only the main Muslim and Christian holidays are considered public holidays. Tanzanian Hindus have temples and celebrate major Hindu ceremonies such as *Navratri* (nine days of worship accompanied each night by *Dandia* Gujarati dances), *Diwali* (the festival of light marked by the exhibition of lamps and candles in temples and houses, as well as firecrackers), *Holi* (festival of colours with a procession of devotees around the temple). Other major festivals include the *Raksha Bandhan* (apology for the brother/sister with a sister tying a coloured thread around the wrist of her brother).

Sunni Muslims celebrate *Eid* and *Mouloud* (or *Maulid*) in common with the Arabs and Africans. Ithnasheri Muslims observe mourning for ten days commemorating the martyrs of Karbala. The ninth night of mourning, the community organizes a procession around the main mosque.

It was previously reported that Indian Christians were mostly Goans and that Catholics were predominant among them. However, among Hindus, there have been conversions to Pentecostal Churches and Assemblies in recent years. Some of these prayer meetings are held in houses where prayers are conducted in Hindi or Gujarati languages.

Hindus living in Tanzania recognize the division of society into castes that correspond to the existence of groups or sub-community groups that are statutory and socio-regional in nature. (Brahmins, Lohanas, Patels, Kumbhars, etc.). Although compliance with membership in respect to castes seems largely confined to older generations, adherence to each one's caste is generally revealed during religious ceremonies and marriage. While trading castes are mainly divided based on geographical origins (Lohanas, Patels, Bhatias, etc.), artisan castes are only based on the professional criteria (*soni*: goldsmiths, *suthar*: masons; *mochi*: shoemakers; *dhobi*: laundry workers; *kumbhar*: potters; *varan*: hairdressers, etc.). Each community (*jati*) has its own facilities including meeting rooms and a temple where religious ceremonies and other rituals, including weddings and funerals services, are held.

Relationships between different *jati* generally go beyond the borders that are strictly defined by religious norms. This is probably a consequence

of migration, loosening of dogmatic tests and the occasional need for all castes to rally against possible threats against Hindus in general.

A part from the Brahmins and a very small number of *kshatryia*, merchant castes (or *Vaishya* rank) are the ones that are of higher social status in Tanzania. Some of them have property that range from key industries to big businesses (processors, wholesalers and supermarkets). Artisan castes have generally kept their traditional activities since their arrival in Africa (which can be traced to three or four generations). Very few of them have had access to intellectual professions (doctors, lawyers, engineers, etc.). However, the current generation is more critical of the traditional family occupations. This generation openly contests caste differences and claims the right of access to higher education and respectable professions. Furthermore, the current generation rarely considers caste differences a factor as far as marriage is concerned. According to them, the days of marriages arranged by parents are gone. It is true that today, boys and girls meet daily in schools, colleges and at receptions as well as during community events. They say that they inform their parents about their partners' choice without worrying about caste affiliation.

On their side, Indian Muslims reject the principle of the caste system because, according to Islamic principles, all Muslims are brothers before God. Yet, as earlier mentioned, a look at their subgroups reveals that they have maintained status based categories that are similar to castes. Sunnis are thus divided into subgroups such as *hajjam* (hairdressers), *kumbhar* (potters and sculptors), *suthar* (masons), *sunar* (goldsmiths), *luhar* (blacksmiths), without forgetting the *sayyed* (a superior group whose members claim to be descendants of Prophet Mohammed). Divisions comparable to those of Hindus also exist on the basis of geographic origin between Cutch, Damania, Kokni, etc.

Goans are from South-Western India and the majority of them are Catholics. This explains why there are no formal divisions based on status in this community. However, it is unlikely that they mix with other social groups, particularly in relation to marriage.

Tanzanian Indians, in general, have a great attachment to the strength of family ties. The residential model is the extended family whereby a married girl goes to stay with her husband's family that comprises of three and sometimes four generations (grandparents, parents, married sons, their wives and their children, sons and unmarried daughters). An interview carried out in a family with a grandmother, her son, her

daughter in law, a married grand son, his wife and four children reveals continuous attachment to the extended family :

“My mother’s house was no different from this house”, said the daughter in law. “We all lived in a three room flat, with our parents and grandfather and grandmother and my two sisters and two brothers. Some times our cousins came from Arusha and they also stayed with us. I like staying in the house with many people. We cook together we watch movies together and we go shopping together, there is nothing to hide, yah some times I feel like I want to be alone with my husband or watch certain kind of movie with him but we can’t if the whole family is there. Some times I feel like going out with my husband only but that doesn’t happen a lot, because we have to go with my sisters in law.

The extended family residential model is certainly the most prevalent among Tanzanian Indians, though it is not totally exclusive model of the nuclear family. However, couples living away from the husband’s parents continue to maintain strong ties with the generation of ascendants by visiting them at least once per week and making food offerings. Most respondents said that it is not common for the sons to move away from their parents’ houses even when they are adults, especially when the house is part of the family property with a shop or a whole sale business on the first floor. Indeed, the son or sons are supposed to inherit their fathers’ activities and the house while girls leave to get married. However, among rich Indians in Tanzania, young couples today often receive a house as a wedding gift from their parents. Therefore sons acquire their own homes with their wives and children without relinquishing their rights to the family property (in this case their parents’ current houses). The family is like a nodal organization for Indians living in Tanzania, even when it is dispersed in different regions of the country. For example, a couple living in Tanga, 500 km North of Dar es Salaam, with family members scattered in Arusha, Zanzibar and Dar es Salaam, makes at least six trips per year from Tanga to visit family members. Weddings and funerals are the most common reasons for these visits, as explained by one respondent:

I was in Arusha last week for two days, I had to go for the bridal shower of my cousin but now I hear my mother in law is sick in Zanzibar so I will be going to see her. It is expensive to make all these trips especially when I am not working, only my husband’s salary is not enough for our three daughter, but we also have to think of the family, I can’t say we don’t have money to come see the sick, it doesn’t work like that.

Beyond the extended family, social ties are most closely maintained by the organization in each community (*jati*). Each community has its own temple (in Dar es Salaam, Hindu temples are almost all situated along Kisutu Street). Daily religious practices usually take place in domestic temples. However, important ceremonies such as Navratri, Holi and Diwali bring together all members of the community. There are also non-religious ceremonies that are usually organized by women's committees. Continuous relations between members of a community that are scattered (Zanzibar, Dar es Salaam, other regions of Tanzania) are maintained by means of sports and games. Some relations are inter communal (*bonanza*). Other inter communal events such as *Dandia Nites* (or Dandiya Nights, a dancing party in honour of the goddess Durga)¹ is celebrated by Hindus, but attended by representatives from other communities. Members of the host region thus take the responsibility of inviting non-Hindu communities.

Other than the residential family group, kinship relations remain at the heart of the social functioning of the Indian diaspora. Extended families form a patrilineage known as *kutumb*. Each lineage is divided into segments: *nath* (gurajati) or *jath* (hindi/urdu). The protocol compels *kutumb* members to respect certain ceremonial obligations, particularly at weddings and funerals. Among Hindus, marriage rules are based on the principle of exogamy where no marriage was allowed within the lineage or within the clan. This family exogamy is combined with caste endogamy because rules stipulate that marriage is supposed to take place within one's community. After the wedding, the couple's residence is her parents' in law house as we saw earlier.

Like Hindus, Indian Muslims practice the patrilineal rule as well as the rule where the newly wedded wife stays with her parents-in-law. However, unlike the Hindus, they practice endogamy at the family level to some extent. Marriage between first and second (patri-lateral) cousins is a common practice. It is also noteworthy that the maternal relatives take part in consultations and negotiations preceding the marriage. Although Koranic rules allow men to marry up to four wives, most of Indian Muslims in Tanzania are monogamous. Nevertheless, it is true that some of them have concubines, though if they take them for wives, marriage is kept secret and children born of this union are excluded from inheritance.

(1) *Durga*: goddess – mother of Hinduism, Shiva's wife, celebrated in October.

The position of women varies according to the community to which they belong, their religion, the social status of their families and their level of education. For example, Ithnasheri women are obliged to wear black veils while Ismailia and Hindu women are not subjected to such obligations. As far as social life is concerned, there is a wide range of behaviors, from liberal education among the Ismailia to conservative behaviour in other communities. The more a woman is educated, the more she asserts her freedom, but she often remains restricted by religious norms and traditional customs. Women of Indian origin face the same challenges in daily life as Arab and African women.

Two important social standards imposed on all women are modesty and chastity. This explains why relationships between young people remain strictly controlled by families. Unmarried women can not accept invitations to parties or picnics unaccompanied by a relative. However, in practice, girls and boys succumb to teenage love and secret meetings. In spite of this, very few of them dare engaging in a sexual relationship for fear of being rejected by their community if the secret of this relationship is discovered.

Whether married or not, women remain largely subservient to men in most cases. Unmarried girls exclusively reside with their parents and are under their care. If not, it is the girls' uncles, brothers or cousins who take care of them. Married women are required to take care of household issues even if they are engaged in a professional career. They are expected to become mothers. They must also respect and serve their in-laws. Some Indian women in Tanzania have been successful in a particular profession, business or politics. However, their success in life is measured by their community in terms of their marriage and their children. Even when they are economically independent, women do not enjoy certain privileges and freedoms that the urban society gives to men of the Indian elite. A woman of Indian origin would be rebuked if she went alone to a pub or if she lived in celibacy. Again, habits like drinking alcohol and smoking are highly condemned.

Though the majority of Indians in Tanzania were professionally engaged in commercial activities in the past, this situation is about to change. Alongside with wholesale and retail businesses (food, hardware and ironmongery, textiles and clothing, etc.), the range of jobs currently held by the Tanzanian Indians has greatly expanded, from the company directors or marketing managers to clerks, taxi drivers, salesmen in shops and receptionists. While it is true that the most popular activities are on the side of finance, information technology, engineering and medicine, there are also teachers of Indian origin, mostly employed

in private schools. A minority of Indians own significant commercial and industrial businesses, particularly in the field of tourism and manufacturing industries.

Intra communal relations remain very strong in trade because they often provide easy solutions and also because the community's cohesion is considered a necessity for the survival of its members. This explains why the Bohras were encouraged by their spiritual leader to engage their business ventures in partnership with members of their own community. However, spurred by the new generation that is accustomed to meeting other communities through school, movies, clubs and discos, business relationships between different communities are now developing.

On the contrary, social relations with Africans are still very limited. Tanzanian Indians have come up with a list of bars, restaurants and pubs belonging to persons of Indian origin and offering music, dances and songs from India or of Indian taste. Thus, it is impossible to meet any Indian in any of the African bars of Sinza or Kinondoni or in a *taarab* or *msondo*² dance. Indians are deeply opposed to mixed marriages and often exclude Afro-Indian couples. While the community uneasily adapts to a union between an Indian man and an African woman, the opposite, that is to say a union between an African man and an Indian woman is even more strongly criticized and condemned. In contrast, marriages with European women and men have a certain tolerance. Even among Muslims and Christians, religions that preach brotherhood in the name of Allah or Jesus Christ to their followers, no effort has been made to break these cultural and racial barriers. As long as this trend persists in Tanzania, it will not be surprising to hear Africans using disparaging terms against Indians in the streets and public transport.

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(2) Local dance to music of Swahili origin.

“Indians are Exploiters and Africans Idlers!”

Identity formation and socio-economic conditions in Tanzania¹.

Marie-Aude FOUÉRÉ

In Tanzania and across East Africa, the identity categories of “Asians” (or “Indians”)² and “Africans” constitute ethnic references imbued with racial overtones through which people commonly identify one another. Although these popular divisions seem to reflect somatic distinctions, they draw primarily from exacerbated cultural and socioeconomic differences as shaped by colonial rule and local modes of categorizing which reflect the ubiquitous presence of racial thought in the region. Present-day Tanzanian society is not a melting pot in which people of different backgrounds blend together peacefully; it rather exemplifies a plural society or double-faced communitarianism in which people live side-by-side but separately – at least when it comes to “Indians” and “Africans” (Brennan 2012). Indeed, the relatively smooth coexistence

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- (1) This research would not have been possible without support from the French Institute for Research in Africa (IFRA) in 2006 as well as a Lavoisier post-doctoral grant from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2004-2005. I am grateful to Criana Connal for assisting with the translation to English. This English version includes various revisions and changes of the French original, and an update of the works cited.
- (2) Before the partition of India in 1947, immigrants from the Indian sub-continent who settled in Tanzania were referred to by the English term “Indians” or its Swahili equivalent *Wahindi*. Today they are called “Asians” in English and *Wahindi* in Swahili. The Swahili term *Waasia* (“Asians”) is not much in use

of immigrants of Asian descent and Africans established during the colonial era then rhetorically reconducted during the postcolonial socialist period has not been devoid of tensions and resentment which, since the settlement of the first Indian immigrants in the 19th century, have varied following political and economic transformations. The ambivalent relations between these two groups in relation to conceptions of belonging can mainly be seen in urban centres where most Asian migrants settled. The city of Dar es Salaam where people of Asian origin have a strong demographic and economic weight provides a good vantage point to observe intercommunity relations and explore the way identity categories have been constructed and entrenched over time.

Through an analysis of the formation and reinforcement of “Asian” and “African” identity categories in an urban context, this paper gives insight into the multifaceted concrete, perceived and imagined relationships between social groups. Contrary to culturalist interpretations according to which the impossible integration of Asian immigrants is the result of insurmountable and inherent cultural differences – therefore making identity an objective entity – this work in anthropology contends that identity formation is the result of processes that can only be understood through a historicized and politicized approach to society. It gives insight into the pre-colonial, colonial and postcolonial “situations” (Balandier 1991 [1969]) to explore category building and its underpinning drivers. Such a genealogy of identity should contribute to revise binary readings that assert a clear-cut opposition between rich merchants and landlords of Asian origin and the exploited mass of Africans. It will show that the links between the African and the Asian worlds are still fragile and unstable today as a result of elite manipulation of politicized identities in the current context of economic liberalization.

The differential constitution of identities, statuses and socio-economic positions

This genealogy of identity begins with an overview of identity formation against the backdrop of social, political and economic history. The earliest forms of contact between migrants from the Indian subcontinent and people living along the coast and in the islands of Zanzibar, followed by the impact of colonial rule, contributed to building a sharp socioeconomic and cultural divide between these groups.

From migrating merchants to 'internal aliens'

Since antiquity, the coast of eastern Africa has been a meeting point between people from different regions of the world, primarily from the African interior, southern Arabia, Persia, China and India³. Commercial activities drew together the inhabitants of the coast and Arab and Asian traders. The growth of coastal towns between the 12th and 15th century bears witness to the existence of a flourishing trade: African populations of the hinterland supplied hides, gold, ivory and slaves to Swahili⁴ traders for resale, while foreign traders originating from countries bordering the Indian Ocean acquired these commodities in exchange for fabrics, ceramic, porcelain and pearls. Swahili intermediation was the tacit rule of the game in trade. As stated by Thomas Vernet (2004: 64, my translation) "on the one hand, relations with the people of the hinterland were facilitated by the cultural proximity that the Swahili culture, profoundly African, shared with them. On the other hand, Islam facilitated trade with foreign merchants, mostly Muslims." Many testimonies show that the position of middlemen occupied by the Swahili limited direct contacts between suppliers of goods⁵. It is only after integration into Swahili city-states, through patronage links, blood brotherhood or marriage that foreigners from different backgrounds started to mix with each other. Because this integration rapidly led to acculturation through the adoption of the cultural and occupational features of Swahili society (Islam, urbanity, trade), the notion of "foreigner" quickly became irrelevant. This is how, over the centuries, inhabitants of the East Africa interior were gradually incorporated into the Swahili world. The term "African" therefore primarily referred to people who were unfamiliar with the urban trade life at the coast, living in the towns and villages of the hinterland. In the case of migrants from the Indian subcontinent, integration into Swahili society depended upon the type of migration.

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- (3) Navigation on the Indian Ocean is facilitated by the monsoon. From the month of December, winds push boats from the Arab peninsula and from India towards the African coast. From the month of April, sailors are blown back by these winds.
 - (4) Without exploring into details the definition of the "Swahili" people, let's mention here that this term is used to refer to people of black African origin who have been living on the East African coast from the 8th century and, mainly through commercial and social contacts with Arabs, developed a specific Islamic, urban and trade culture characterized by a high degree of spatial mobility and the creation of long-distance trans-national networks (see Horton & Middleton 2000, Caplan & Le Guennec 1991 as well as the introductory chapter in this publication).
 - (5) For example, according to the Arab geographer Ibn Battuta, occupants of commercial vessels were not allowed to walk the Mogadishu streets freely: "They must live with a trader with whom they are bound to do business together" (Vernet 2004, my translation).

Indeed, until the middle of the 18th century, migrants from India were primarily merchants specialized in seasonal trade (Bennett 1978, Sheriff 1987) who had no plan to settle permanently in East Africa. Being seasonal migrants, these traders were considered foreigners in Swahili society and regarded themselves as such (Lofchie 1965). If evidence of permanent settlement in Swahili cities was reported in the chronicles of the first observers of the East African coast⁶, the “Asians” of that time belonged to the category of seasonal foreign merchants integrated into the Indian Ocean trading system. They differed more in terms of the type of commodities they imported than in view of any strictly bounded ethnic, racial or cultural identity.

From seasonal mobile foreigners unfamiliar with the Swahili culture, Indian merchants progressively became “internal aliens” in a society structured by old hierarchies that left them little room and weighed heavily on the relationship they could build with the local population. After an on-and-off presence of the Portuguese with little significant impact on trade between the 16th and 18th centuries⁷, the Imamate of Muscat in Oman extended its control over the eastern coast of Africa⁸. 1832, the year when Seyyid Said, Imam of Muscat, transferred his capital to Zanzibar symbolized the beginning of the decline of the Swahili for the benefit of Omani Arabs. Zanzibar Town, in the archipelago bearing the same name⁹, became the main trading centre of the East African coast. It was at this time that Indian migrants, who had continued to be part of the many traders flocking to the islands until then, were invited by the new authorities to occupy positions of intermediaries in finance and trade between Zanzibar and the African coast (Mangat 1969). In 1819, 200 Indians had permanently settled in Zanzibar; in 1859, their number was almost 2,000. From the early 1860s, the Sultan, in a bid to consolidate his power over the cities of the Swahili coast and his control

(6) See Bennett (1978) and Sheriff (1987) about the arrival of the explorer Vasco de Gama in East Africa.

(7) From the first half of the 16th century, the Portuguese presence modified the hierarchy of the Swahili city-states and led to the submission to the Portuguese crown through payment of tributes. Yet, the commercial organization and cultural characteristics of the East African coast remained unchanged up to the beginning of the 18th century.

(8) In 1698, the archipelago of Zanzibar became a possession of the Imamate of Muscat. Arabs from the region of Oman extended their influence on the East African coast all along the 18th century. I am grateful to Iain Walker for raising my attention on historical aspects about the Imamate of Muscat in Zanzibar.

(9) The archipelago of Zanzibar is made up of two islands: Unguja (commonly known as Zanzibar) and Pemba. In order to avoid confusion, we shall refer here to Unguja as “Zanzibar Island”, while “the archipelago of Zanzibar”, “the islands of Zanzibar” or “Zanzibar” designate the two islands.

of the caravan trade, made a small coastal market town of little economic importance the main port of transit for goods between the mainland and Zanzibar. Renamed Dar es Salaam, the future metropolis of Tanganyika attracted Indian and Arab traders in the Omani government. In 1887, there were nearly 6,000 Indians in East Africa, half of them in the islands of Zanzibar while the other half settled on the continent.

The majority of Indian immigrants in Zanzibar and then Dar es Salaam came from the southeastern part of today's Pakistan and northwestern India (Gujarat, Punjab, Kutch, Kathiawar, Maharashtra)¹⁰. Being speakers of various regional dialects (Gujarati, Marathi, Kutchi, Punjabi, Konkani, etc.), they belonged to the religions of the Indian world (Hindus, Jains, Parsis, Sikhs, Goans) or to various denominations of the Great Religions (such as Sunni Muslims, Shia Muslims, or Christians) influenced by Hinduism. They also represented all the socio-professional statuses of the caste system and adhered to varied local customs. In short, they formed "a sort of small replica of India" (Adam 2006, my translation) that could not easily be reduced to broad common features. As for people who were later referred to as "Africans", they were also internally strongly differentiated. Zanzibar hosted Swahili merchants as well as indigenous people known as Shirazi or Afro-Shirazi¹¹, themselves divided into three main groups, Wahadimu, Watumbatu and Wapemba. There were also slaves originating from the mainland and employed as domestic or farm workers. Swahili society was structured based on the practice of Islam and the adoption of the Middle East Arab culture rather than with reference to skin colour and geographical origin (Caplan and Le Guennec 1991). The sharing of these characteristics guaranteed their inclusion in the marriage system and the social networks of Swahili patricians.

The Indian minority and indigenous Africans

The earliest forms of naturalized identities and constructed identity boundaries date back to the period when Indians started settling under the Omani and British supervision. Legal-administrative and economic factors combine to explain the reduction of a variety of identities and economic situations into essentialized categories. Unlike

(10) Overpopulation, drought and famine, the monopolization of the public service by the British colonial authorities and heavy taxes were the main causes of emigration from the Indian sub-continent (Iliffe 1979: 139, Gregory 1993: 6-8).

(11) The term "Afro-Shirazi" or "Shirazi" refers to people who had lived in the islands of Zanzibar for centuries.

the seasonal Indo-Pakistani traders who had previously travelled across the Indian Ocean, Indian newcomers settling in Zanzibar from the beginning of the 19th century had the status of “British subjects”. In islands officially under Omani domination, but unofficially controlled by the European powers¹² (primarily Great Britain), their social life (education, religious practices, legal status) was subjected to the same rules¹³ as those applicable to Indians residing in India, a territory of the British Crown at that time. Following the practice established in India, they were registered under the term “Indians” in administrative documents. The discriminative legal and administrative status that these immigrants were subject to however secured their preferential treatment: encouraged to volunteer to immigration by the British, they came to Zanzibar to occupy the positions of merchants and bankers in a booming plantation economy¹⁴. Their economic interests, congruent with those of the East India Company, were therefore protected¹⁵. In 1830s, a few Indians were appointed to key economic positions, such as custom inspectors and bankers of the state¹⁶. In addition to these well-off traders, there were also Indian creditors to whom the Omani and Afro-Shirazi landowners of Zanzibar were increasingly indebted. Lastly, many retailers, small landowners, impoverished farmers and craftsmen

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- (12) The Amity and Commerce treaties passed by Seyyid Said with the United States of America (1833), Great Britain (1839) and France (1844) ratified preferential trade agreements and authorized the establishment of foreign consulates in Zanzibar, after which the new authorities of the islands became increasingly dependent upon British control (Deplechin 1991: 15).
 - (13) With the creation of the British Agency controlled by the British government of Bombay and the Eastern India Company in 1841, Indians were subjected to tougher legal provisions. There was open racial discrimination against them based on the imperialist principle of “divide and rule”. Specific laws only applied to them. For example, between 1860 and 1869, Indians were not allowed to have domestic slaves (Bader 1991: 168). They were also not allowed to participate in the slave trade.
 - (14) The cultivation of cloves in Zanzibar was introduced between 1810 and 1820. With coconut trees cultivated for the production of copra (dried coconut almond meant for oil extraction), clove trees were the main source of wealth in the islands at that time.
 - (15) Writing about Captain Smee’s visit to Zanzibar in 1915, Bader (1991: 184) states that the latter, representing the Government of Bombay, came to counter attempts by Omani governors to increase custom duties (see also Hollingsworth 1953). The gradual introduction of the Indian rupee in financial transactions was designed to promote trade with India.
 - (16) Jairam Sewji was a Hindu Bhatia large merchant in Zanzibar. He was appointed collector of customs duties, head of the port and state banker by the sultan. He financially contributed to the establishment of Indian businesses in Zanzibar. In the 1870s, he was temporarily replaced by Tharia Topan, an Ismaili trader renowned for financing Tippu Tapp’s slave and ivory caravans. In Dar es Salaam, it was the Hindu Bhatia trader Ramji Pragji who was appointed to be in charge of collecting custom duties (Gregory 1993: 21, Bader 1991: 168-9, Sheriff 1987: 107-9).

who settled in Zanzibar and Dar es Salaam shared the difficult living conditions of most indigenous Africans¹⁷. The economic situations of immigrants were therefore extremely varied. However, the fact that they were subsumed into a single legal category reduced the perception of the variety of real situations on the ground and contributed to their isolation from other elements of Swahili society.

In Zanzibar, Africans were also subjected to strict legal-administrative classifications for the purpose of census as well as social and economic control. Administrative documents identified “Arabs” and “Africans” alongside the “Indians”. The identity category of “Arabs” mainly comprised the Omani who had settled during earlier times, while “Africans” subsumed the rest of the population, hence hiding the high variety of their economic situations. Afro-Shirazi landowners, members of small peasantry working as seasonal workers on clove plantations, slaves or landless ex-slaves (or “squatters”), domestic servants, dock workers, porters (*wachukuzi* in Swahili) and low-skilled craftsmen: all were gathered under the category “Africans”, as the British administration designated them, under the pretext that they were the only true indigenous people of the country (referred to as “Natives”). The display of these identity categories being translated into legal provisions and discriminatory policies, whether in the social and economic sectors, in urban settings or in the realm of ideology, rigidified racial representations of communities, all the more so as they resonated with already deep-rooted hierarchies in Zanzibari society and their underpinning racial thought (Glassman 2011). In spite of its history of cosmopolitanism and identity fluidity, Zanzibar had indeed also created its own racial boundaries – especially between “Africans” and “Arabs” – which vocal local intellectuals of the struggle for independence later reinforced.

This shows how, from the time of the Zanzibari sultanate that was de facto ruled by Great Britain, the political and institutional administration of the islands of Zanzibar and the Swahili coast entrenched identity taxonomies which, for the reason that they were partly congruent with existing community modes of racial categorization, and in spite of the ambivalence of colonial rule, shaped local conceptions of belonging. The similitude in the material conditions of life between Indians and

(17) After the abolition of the slave trade (1873) and slavery (1897), British authorities brought Indian coolies to work in clove tree plantations alongside indigenous African peasants and newly freed African slaves. The emigration of Indian manpower was quickly stopped when it turned out to be a lot more expensive than the labour from the African continent (Deplechin 1991: 22-23, 1991 Sheriff: 118-119).

the small section of urban educated Africans did not reduce their social and symbolic distance. Wealthy Africans were excluded from the Indian monopoly on trade, whether wholesale or retail. And the reputation of renowned Indian merchants and Indian control of the financial system on the islands largely implanted encompassing ethno-religious stereotypes among poor Africans.

In this process of communal identity formation, it is also essential to consider how the Asian newcomers withdrew from the rest of society. Kept at a distance by both Europeans and Africans, Indians indeed also distanced themselves from others by strengthening and even creating new ties within their community, thus hiding their original internal plurality and emerging disagreements while selecting attributes that were susceptible to unite them: their status as foreigners, similar working conditions under the hallmark of trade and finance, and especially shared geographical origin, mainly the eastern part of India. Strong ties were maintained with India, the largest importer of cloves from Zanzibar and the country of origin of commodities transported to East Africa. The call for protection of the Indian traders of Zanzibar by their partners living in India, when Great Britain decided to end the practice of appointing an Indian to the post of Customs Inspector, illustrates the strength of interfamily and intercommunity networks that structured the Indian Ocean trade at that time. Gregory (1993: 20) emphasizes another significant factor that led to the socio-cultural isolation of Indians, namely the desire on the part of modest business families to escape, through emigration, the pre-colonial predatory Indian state¹⁸. Endogamous marriage practices, residential segregation¹⁹, and exclusive food habits²⁰ also contributed to the social exclusion of Indian families. The social hierarchies determined by the caste system were amongst the root causes of such withdrawal attitudes. This heavily influenced how relationships developed with the African host community, whom Indians compared to the animist outcasts of India. Africans were treated with contempt and relegated to tasks considered most demeaning

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- (18) According to Gregory (1993: 20), "for centuries in India, they had struggled to preserve their property and conduct business against usurping officials representative of the Mogul emperor and succeeding local rajas and sultans (...). The Asians left India imbued with the concept that the best government is that which governs least".
 - (19) Many Asian families settled in the elegant old town of Zanzibar, known as the "Stone town" (*Mji Mkongwe* in Swahili, literally meaning "Old town"), while the majority of Africans resided in the peripheral poor suburb of *Ng'ambo*.
 - (20) The prohibition of eating food prepared by strangers to their community or even their caste (Gregory 1993) limits the participation of Indians in inclusive social activities.

(Prunier 1998, Dumont 1979 [1966]). It is noteworthy that even humble Indian families of the city employed African staff, whereas the reverse was not possible²¹. In addition, the British authorities in Zanzibar encouraged Indians to establish their own schools, hospitals, churches, credit agencies and insurance companies, social solidarity associations and places of recreation based upon the principles of community segregation.

Indispensable foreigners or internal enemies?

At the end of the 19th century, increasing economic and social control by the British and German colonial powers strengthened communal identification along racial lines. In 1885, the territory of Tanganyika came under the control of the German Empire²², while in 1890 Zanzibar became a British protectorate. Throughout the colonial era, the establishment of bounded racial categories separating Indians and indigenous Africans was the result of tightened legal-administrative measures and change in the economic and social life.

Internal enemies during the European colonisation

From 1890 to 1916, the impact of social and economic changes that occurred in the administration of the islands of Zanzibar on people's forms of identification was limited. However, from 1900, the British began to fear the financial clout of Indian merchants and bankers. At this time, it became apparent to the colonizer that clove plantations – legally the property of rich Omani Arabs and Afro-Shirazis – were actually in the hands of their Indian moneylenders. The British took the risk of withdrawing some of the rights Indians had enjoyed as British subjects. No representative of the Indian community was invited to participate in the Protectorate Council, the decision-making body of the British protectorate. These measures strengthened the feeling among Indians that they were the puppets of British power. Treated by the British as a culturally and religiously homogeneous entity on the grounds of an “ethno-racial” definition, they responded by merging into a single community mould. The formation of the first associations along ethnic lines, whether it bears witness to the existence of a true consciousness

(21) See Hadjivayanis and Ferguson (1991: 195) who quote a report dating from 1958 noting that “the Asian merchants and commercial class had the largest number of domestic servants in the Protectorate by World War II”. These African workers, often children, were poorly paid, poorly fed and poorly housed, yet they worked tirelessly.

(22) In 1891, Tanganyika, Rwanda and Burundi formed German East Africa (*Deutsche Ost-Afrika*).

as an oppressed class (yet structured along racial divisions) or points to the influence of the British administration's hallowed racial ideology, confirmed the pervasiveness of distinct "racial" categories and made visible identities that, until then, had been more bureaucratic tools than truly collective sense of belonging. Considering the economic interests at stake, it is not surprising that the first of these associations was actually the Indian Merchants' Association. Founded in 1905, this association brought together Indian elites keen to defend their economic and political interests and willing to remain in good terms with the British.

In the capital city of German Tanganyika, Dar es Salaam, the Indians who had fled the nit-picking controls of British rule²³ set up their shops and businesses in a town divided by urban zoning in accordance with the *Bauordnung* of 14th May 1891 that imposed urban and architectural obligations (Raimbault 2006). The existence of three major residential areas (Zone I for Europeans – today's business centre, Zone II for Indians – today's city centre, and Zone III for Africans – or Kariakoo) led to spatial, economic and ethno-racial segregation²⁴. The identity categories used in the German administration only partially tallied with those developed by the British in Zanzibar. The main distinction cut across Europeans and non-Europeans (also called *Farbigen*, that is to say, "coloured"). Among non-Europeans, distinction was made between natives (the *Eingeborenen*, or "indigenous", who included Africans and Arabs) and non-natives (Indians). Though a minority²⁵, Indians had the largest number of traders, merchants and landowners in Dar es Salaam just as in Zanzibar. Relations of interdependence developed with Africans who were flocking into a rapidly growing capital. Wealthy Indian landowners allowed African migrants to settle on their land in exchange of rent. In the city centre, Indians rented to Africans the houses and rooms they owned. Indians were consequently seen as belonging to those who wielded economic and financial power along with Europeans and large Arab or Swahili families. Even small Indian shopkeepers living

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- (23) Some large Indian business corporations, such as those belonging to Sewa Hajee Paroo and Alidina Visram, moved into the German territory to evade constraints of the British administration (Bader 1991).
 - (24) Frank Raimbault notes that among historians, the debate is not settled on the relationship between urban planning and racial ideology. According to the author (2006: 43), "in 1891, the settlers' objectives were not to geographically spread a racial vision of a colonial society that was still in limbo. The proof is that many Africans continued to live in administrative and residential districts. In addition, it is not possible to find traces of a desire to impose administrative segregation before 1906." (my translation)
 - (25) From 1913, the population of Dar es Salaam was about 22,500 people, among them 20,000 Africans and 2,500 Indians. See the 1864 census (Lofchie 1965).

downtown, whose standard of living aligned with that of some Africans, remained perceived as foreigners in the eyes of Africans spatially isolated in Zone III, excluded from the official business circles and relegated to the bottom of the social ladder. Harshly treated by their bosses as well as by the colonial administration, Africans could not benefit arrangements with the law that were accessible to Arabs and rich Indians²⁶ due to their 'generosity' towards this administration²⁷. The same manifestations of racial inequality were observed in the other regions of Tanganyika. After the relative deployment of Indians in the hinterland following the construction of the railway from Dar es Salaam to Kigoma – a small market town located on the shores of Lake Tanganyika – the transformations affecting Dar es Salaam extended to other towns (Giblin 2005, Iliffe 1979). This shows that urban organization, division of labour and social hierarchies not merely mirrored a colonial society haunted by the racial question but contributed to shaping and strengthening such type of society.

From 1916, the whole of Tanganyika came under British control following the defeat of Germany in East Africa. In the years that followed, many Indians were recruited into the public service as junior officers and into the army, while ongoing voluntary immigration from India led to the influx of small traders, clerks, workers and artisans. The presence and economic success of Indian immigrants became a subject of concern for the British settlers. Between 1920 and 1930, debt and housing mortgage²⁸ ratio of Arab and Swahili large landowners in the islands of Zanzibar reached such a high level that the British authorities decided to put in place legal measures that limited wealth accumulation among Indian traders (including the interdiction to acquire new land through the Clove Bonus Scheme in 1922 and the Alienation of Land Decree in 1934; and a control of issuance of business licenses by the Clove Exporters' Decree in 1934)²⁹.

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- (26) After debates in the colonial administration in 1906, the governor allowed well-to-do Indians to build houses in European residential quarters (Raimbault 2006: 43).
 - (27) Sewa Haji, a renowned Indian of the 1880s-1890s, donated his land to the German colonial administration on his death in 1897 (Raimbault 2006: 73). During this period, some Indian merchants were much richer than Europeans, and some big names were close to high-ranking colonial officials.
 - (28) From 1880s, one-third of the clove plantations were funded through Indian credits (Bader 1991: 173). Between 1923 and 1935, nearly 500,000 of the 2 million clove trees on the island of Zanzibar were owned by Indian bankers (Mlahagwa and Temu 1991: 158-159).
 - (29) Attempts to curb the economic activities of rich Indians after decades of promotion by the British resulted from fears that Indians might destabilize the official Arab power, consequently generating social disorder and threatening European economic interests. As Mangat recalls (1969: 5), quoting the British Proconsul John Kirk, Indians were

Considered an “anti-Indian legislation” by the Indians of Tanganyika and Zanzibar, these measures sparked off a major outcry. The British colonial government backed down in 1938 only after commercial pressures were exerted by Indian business partners from India through an embargo on cloves. If it were not for the strong ties they had maintained with India, the East African Indians would not have been able to maintain their economic position in Zanzibar. Yet this event marked a turning point in British perception of the Indians living in East Africa: this business elite came to epitomize a “necessary evil” of colonial economy who needed to be controlled after they proved capable of overriding measures adopted by the colonial government through the strength of their transnational network (Bader 1991: 174). In the 1940s, Indians were once and for all reduced to a middle class position; they always featured prominently in the economic sphere, but were maintained firmly in political and symbolic dependence.

African excesses against Indian targets

In Dar es Salaam, the policy of spatial segregation that the German powers had put in place was reinforced under British rule. New discriminatory laws were enforced to control African migrants attracted by the opportunities³⁰ offered by the capital city. From the 1920s, the colonial administration used the term *wahuni* in reference to idle Africans driven to Dar es Salaam to seek employment. According to the historian Andrew Burton, *wahuni* included marginal, unfamiliar, uncontrolled and potentially rebellious sections of the urban population (2005: 5-6). Laws were enacted to prevent massive rural exodus, perceived as a threat by the urban wealthy elite, namely Europeans, Indians and the emerging African elite. From 1920, new urban rules (Township Rules) limited Africans’ residency rights and sanctioned disorders that could interfere with public order (vagrancy, prostitution, gambling and betting). The Destitute Persons Ordinance of 1923 authorized to arrest without notice any person who was “apparently destitute”, that is to say people without a job or a clearly identifiable livelihood. In 1924, urban segregation was reinforced by the creation of a neutral zone, or sanitary corridor, which corresponds to the open space currently known as *Mnazi Mmoja*

nevertheless indispensable to the establishment of British rule during the earlier period of European colonisation: “It was entirely through the Indian merchants that we were enabled to build up the influence that resulted in our position (in East Africa).”

(30) Andrew Burton (2005) underlines the gap between the reality of the job market and expectations of upward mobility that drove people from all regions of Tanzania to seek employment in Dar es Salaam.

between Zone II and Zone III. These three areas were informally named to reflect the “races” residing there: *Uzunguni*, *Uhindini*, *Uswahilini*³¹. However, throughout the period of British colonialism, racial and residential segregation remained more of an urban ideal than a reality. Thus, many Indians settled in Kariakoo (Zone III) when Dar es Salaam’s central market was moved there in 1923 – showing, among other examples, that the colonial state was less ambitious and more confused in the field than on paper (Brennan 2012).

The consignment of Africans at the bottom of the social ladder was however further reinforced by the official ban on the transfer of property between Africans and non-Africans within Zone III. In 1944, the arbitrary power that underpinned relations with Africans culminated in the Removal of Undesirable Native Ordinance forbidding all “Natives” (Africans) to walk at night without permission and without light, to hold parties or funeral ceremonies without permission, or to stay in Dar es Salaam for more than a week without official written permission³². In the views of Europeans, Africans were a dangerous class because of their poverty and their alleged idleness. The term “African” became synonymous with “potential hooligan”.

If Europeans were afraid of Africans, they were in fact only marginally exposed to direct attacks – assuming that these attacked could have posed a real danger – because of the tremendous social and spatial distance between them. On the contrary, Indians, residing in the intermediary Zone II between the relegated African zone and the European protected area, were in the firing line. Regarded by Europeans as second-class citizens³³, Indians were seen by Africans as privileged people for the reason that they enjoyed particular rights which Africans envied. Small shopkeepers (*dukawallah*) were mainly the targets of violence. They could be robbed in broad daylight. Two major attacks against Indians marked the interwar period. In 1929, Africans attacked with stones and sticks a group of Indians; and in 1937, an angry mob targeted Indian shops in the city centre, stoning windows and robbing shops. However, except for these isolated incidents, few attacks against Indians actually occurred in spite of the widespread fear of Africans among

(31) The names of residential quarters were coined in reference to the collective identity of their main occupants: *Uzunguni*, “European area” (*Wazungu* in Swahili); *Uhindini*, “Indian area” (*Wahindi* in Swahili); *Uswahilini*, “Swahili area”, the latter being in fact an area where all Africans gathered together. These terms are still used today, especially *Uswahilini*, which have become synonymous with “popular areas”.

(32) In 1950s, 2,000 people were forcefully moved and returned to their villages (Burton 2005).

(33) Among Europeans, the cliché that Indians were dirty was widespread (Burton 2005: 52).

the Indian population (Burton 2005: 137, 181). The Indian press at the time primarily reflected the feeling of fear that affected a population deprived of control on public order – under the responsibility of the colonizers – and of the legitimacy to belong that autochthony would have given them.

Emergence of common interests against colonial power

Barriers erected between Indian immigrants and Africans began to break down when the nationalist movement gained momentum between 1950 and 1960. While the years between 1920 and 1930 were characterized by Indians' lack of involvement in anti-colonial activities, the 1950s and 1960s decades witnessed the entry of Indians into politics, represented by a minority of radical activists. Restrictions on immigration from India, unequal representation in the organs of the colonial government, daily forms of discrimination (such as lower wages than Europeans or lack of access to senior positions) were the cause of such political commitment alongside Africans. On the mainland, the Asian Association was created by prominent members of the Indian community in order to support the nationalist struggle led by the African leaders of the Tanganyika African Association (TAA), renamed the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) in 1954³⁴. However, this participation in the struggle for independence was far from unanimous among the Indians. In Zanzibar particularly, most Indians kept away from the anti-colonial turmoil that gave birth to political parties such as the Zanzibar Nationalist Party (ZNP), mainly gathering the Arab elite, and the Afro-Shirazi Party (ASP), officially the voice of Africans and Shirazis. And on the mainland, although the creation of a political organisation grouping Africans and Indians together was discussed at length, it never materialized.

Moreover, following the partition of India in 1947, internal divisions came to limit Indian anti-colonial mobilization, thus revealing that a large majority of Indians³⁵ actually preferred colonial status quo to the formation of an independent African government. During the discussions on constitutional reforms leading to the independence of Tanganyika, British Governor Sir Edward Twining, who defended the

(34) Influential members of the Asian Association participated in the creation of TANU, though they were forbidden from membership. Moreover, two Indian brothers, Surendra and Tahka Randhir, financed TANU's *Mwafrika* before they created their own newspaper, known as *Nguramo*, committed to the defence of African nationalism (Gregory 1993).

(35) According to Surendra Tahker, "eight to ninety per cent of the Asians hated us" (quoted by Gregory 1993).

establishment of racial parity³⁶, accused TANU and its leader Julius Kambage Nyerere of promoting “black racialism” with the objective of ending European dominance and Indians’ economic power (Iliffe 2005). Illustrious members of the Indian community then sided with the colonizers. In 1955, the statement made by Iqbal Chand Chopra in the United Nations that Tanganyika would only be ready for independence after a further twenty-five years could only but arouse the indignation of African nationalists, though it was approved by a large number of Indians. Similarly, the creation of the United Tanganyika Party (UTP) by the British government to promote multiracial politics and thus try to countervail nationalist claims was widely supported by influential members of the Indian community³⁷. Those Indians were referred to as “Asian stooges” by their opponents (Gregory 1993: 109).

During the 1958-59 elections, when TANU presented ten candidates of Indian origin and had three great defenders of anti-colonialism in Tanganyika elected, namely A. H. Jamal, K. L. Jhaveri and M. N. Rattansey, the whole of the Indian community was filled with political enthusiasm. Yet, after these elections, the number of Indian representatives in the government remained very modest. The political rapprochement between Indians and Africans during the period of the anti-colonial struggle, which could have created conditions for breaking identity boundaries, was short-lived. Socialist policies and the Africanization of government institutions that ensued after the first years of independence were going to put an end to the *entente cordiale* established during the anti-colonial period.

The politics and economics of independent Tanzania

The struggle against colonialism before independence was a rare moment of rapprochement between Africans and Indians in the history of Tanzania, and to a certain extent, in the history of East Africa. During the following post-independence decades, Indians were removed from

(36) According to racial parity, each of the three “races” in Tanganyika was assigned the same number of seats in the Legislative Council, regardless of their total number. According to TANU, defending the rights of the dominated majority, “multi-racialism meant government for the good of Europeans and Indians and eventually only for Europeans. There were only 3 000 Europeans and settlers in Tanganyika, but they intended to rule the country and exhorted all the inhabitants to live quietly together” (speech delivered by Nyerere on 25th January 1957, quoted by Iliffe 2005).

(37) It seems that the Imam of the Aga Khan Ismaili, a wealthy businessman backed by his religious community, financed the party of white settlers, the United Tanganyika Party (Gregory 1993: 109).

power and demonized as capitalists and exploiters accused of hampering the growth of nascent African capitalism.

'African socialism' times (1967-1985)

Tanganyika became independent in 1961 and in April 1964, it united with Zanzibar to form the United Republic of Tanzania. The project of building an egalitarian and non-exploitative society characterized the entire period that followed independence up to the mid-1980s but went through many contradictions. The new Tanzanian nation that official ideology was to build was based on the promotion of national unity and sense of belonging. A detribalized Tanzanian identity indifferent to ethnic and racial origins, tied to one single country, was to replace former divisions resulting from colonization (Nyerere 1967). But this identity, in Tanzania like in the rest of the newly independent African countries, was largely defined in reference to 'African identity' characterized by a common geography, culture and, until that time, what was still called race.

In Tanganyika, the newly elected President, Julius K. Nyerere, opposed racial discrimination upon his entry into politics. True to his words, the first cabinet he named was made up of seven Africans, four Europeans and one Indian: A. H. Jamal. Between 1962 and 1964, nearly half the members of the Asian Association joined TANU following the lifting of the ban on Indians to join the party. Moreover, some members of the Indian community acceded to key positions in the government and public administration: A. Y. A. Karimjee became the Speaker of Parliament; M. M. Devani was made Mayor of Dar es Salaam with D. K. Patel as Deputy Mayor. Yet resentment fuelled by the memories of the privileged positions Indians had formerly occupied combined with Africans' aspirations to take up positions previously denied to them revived old animosities. From 1964, trade unions demanded a rapid Africanization of the public service, that is to say, replacement of members of the Indian community by black Africans. In the same year, similar claims troubled the national army and led to a mutiny that was however quickly controlled. According to Tanzanian Africans, the times when black people were subjugated to Indians occupying senior administrative, military and business positions had to come to an end. In Zanzibar, the revolution of January 1964 led to the polarization of socioeconomic conflicts at the community level. People of Arab and Indian origin, perceived as dominant and confiscatory, became the

targets of verbal and physical abuse and a majority of them took refuge on the mainland³⁸.

From the Arusha Declaration of 1967, which defined and put in place socialist policies that would guide the country until the mid-1980s, called Ujamaa or 'African socialism', tensions between Indians and Africans came to the fore again. Although the values of equality and unity were promoted to pacify the country and contain possible explosions of violence, the demonization of "capitalists" together with socialist policies adopted from that time highly contributed to strengthening divisions among the different communities. After the departure of the colonial masters, Indians were seen as the new representatives of the class of exploiters living upon "landlordism". With other privileged groups of Tanzania such as Arabs and the few African capitalists, they were ostracized in a country that aimed to embrace socialism. These groups were regarded as the enemies of the workers. In 1967, the nationalization of private companies hit traders of Indian origin very badly. In 1972, the nationalization of real estate property under the auspices of the National Housing Corporation (NHC) mainly affected Indians, who were the owners of family houses and small shops in the city centre and in Kariakoo neighbourhood. In 1983, finally, the Economic Sabotage Act officially presented as a policy to fight fraudulent deals and smuggling targeted traders of Indian origin. Until today, these three events are remembered by Tanzanian Indians as typical examples of their persecution. The effects of Ujamaa policies on trade led some analysts to proclaim the demise of the capitalist class, particularly the Indian power (Shivji, 1976, Gregory 1993). From 1966, President of Zanzibar Abeid Amani Karume declared that Zanzibaris had to carry along their Zanzibari identity cards though the procedures of their allocation were not clearly defined³⁹. Arab and Indian minorities, who had always been refused Zanzibari nationality, were the targets of xenophobic political speeches by the president who accused them of being responsible for economic failures and enemies of the nation (Crozon 1992). In addition to these racist statements⁴⁰, expulsions, robberies and threats of all kinds

(38) Zanzibari citizenship was denied to anyone who had left the islands within two months after the 1964 Revolution.

(39) The rules for granting Zanzibari nationality varied over the years. In 1971 a decree was issued stating that "only people with direct African descent can claim citizenship of the islands" (Crozon 1992: 221).

(40) In 1970, President A. A. Karume gave a speech in Zanzibar where he criticized the government of the Union and insulted the Indians residing in the country: "What is the fuss about Indians being citizens of Tanzania; what is this stupid law from a no less silly

took place. In 1969, what is known as the “forced marriages” scandal began as a campaign in favour of interracial mixing but quickly ended up as marriages celebrated under pressure, without the consent of the Arab and Indian families from which girls were forcibly taken away to marry the African men in power. Such measures, attacking the symbols of domination exerted by the formerly politically dominant groups, came as a revengeful conclusion of decades of ethnic and racial differentiation. They resulted in consolidating barriers between Indians and Africans, at the same time reinforcing their status as separate entities and limiting social intermingling between worlds that considered themselves as irreducible foreigners.

Consequently, the socialist period did not lead to the levelling of existing community oppositions already deeply rooted in the Tanzanian social and cultural landscape. Because the people of Indian origin were targeted as capitalist exploiters, they were particularly affected by nationalization policies and expulsions of all kinds as well as subjected to threats and accusations. Unlike Uganda where mass expulsion took place in the early 1970s (Mazrui 1976, Prunier 1990, Twaddle 1975), the Tanzanian government decided to give Indians the choice of either staying in Tanzania or leaving the country. Yet, frightened by increasing discriminatory rhetoric and practices, and having lost most of their financial capital, many Indian families made the decision to leave for exile and settle in the United Kingdom, United States or Canada.

Identities, economic liberalisation and indigenisation (1985-2005)

In 1985, Tanzania turned its back on dying socialist public policies and adopted a capitalist system. In response to pressures from international donors, parastatals and public banks were privatized and private investments in tourism and industry grew quickly (Tripp 1997, Bagachwa 1999). The new opportunities thus created were taken up by foreign investors but also benefited Tanzanians who had a strong capital base, namely entrepreneurs, former government officials and politicians. Among them, citizens of Indian origin had a head start because of their early specialization in various economic activities. It is within such a context that old grievances and resentments were once again openly expressed.

constitution that grants them citizenship? No Indian can be a citizen of Tanzania (...). Let us chase away these dogs that only know how to earn money at our expense under the guise of an alleged Tanzanian citizenship.” (Karume’s speech on 29th October 1970, quoted by Crozon 1992: 221, translated from French).

The departure of Julius K. Nyerere and the election of a new president, Ali Hassan Mwinyi, marked the radical abandonment of a planned socialist economy⁴¹ and the transition to a free market economy. The adoption of structural adjustment plans supervised by the World Bank and the granting of loans by the International Monetary Fund began turning the wheel towards the liberalization of the economy. These measures were followed by successive programs which completed economic and political deregulation (Economic Recovery Program in 1986, Structural Adjustment Facility in 1987, Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility in 1991). The state allowed for the opening of capital firms, the privatization of industries and parastatals, and the freedom of setting up private companies and banks. Given that in the mid-1980s, over 80% of Tanzania's population had lived on subsistence agriculture in rural areas; that means of financial empowerment had been restricted by socialist policies; and that the industrial sector contributed around 6% of gross domestic product only, it is hardly surprising that liberal policies adopted at that time were in the first place profitable to foreign investors (mainly Europeans, Americans and South Africans). Tanzanians who had accumulated enough capital to take advantage of the new economic opportunities came a distant second: they included Arab businessmen of Zanzibari origin, African public servants and politicians, and, finally, renowned Indian merchants. The rest of the population was nowhere to be seen. The new economic landscape of the 1990s was therefore characterized by the emergence of capitalism in Tanzania which, until then, was almost non-existent (Heilman 1998a, 1998b). However, among the small class of local businessmen, the minority of African descent quickly found itself lagging behind large traders of Indian origin because the latter were endowed with more financial means, efficient networks and expertise. In this context of economic transition from state-dominated socialism to a capitalist economy open to the richest entrepreneurs, but closed de facto to Tanzanians with insufficient financial means, debates over the issue of the "indigenization" of the economy in Tanzania began gaining ground.

Between 1995 and 2005, numerous articles appeared in the Tanzanian press about a hypothetical new economic policy, known

(41) The socialist ideal of economic independence promoted at the Arusha Declaration under the Swahili word *kujitegemea* was referred to as "self-reliance" in English and as "relying on one's own strength" in French. However, this official slogan did not deter capitalist practices, particularly foreign loans and investments (Batibo & Martin 1989).

literally as “indigenization” or *uzawa*⁴² in Swahili (Bancet 2004, Fouéré 2009). The content and modalities of implementation of this policy stirred up much controversy in the economic and political spheres (Aminzade 2003). The term *uzawa* appeared for the first time in the political agenda of the NCCR-Mageuzi opposition party (National Convention for Construction and Reforms-Changes) in 1995, the year of the first multiparty elections since the reintroduction of political pluralism. An article published in the weekly *Mfanyakazi* reported the statement made by its former chairman Augustine Mrema⁴³ during a public rally held in Bukoba town in May of the same year. According to the article, the main objective of the *uzawa* policy was to guarantee the entire population equal opportunities in setting up business projects, particularly through the provision of bank loans. It seems that Mrema was very careful not to make this concept a springboard for the promoters of racial discrimination: according to him, all Tanzanian citizens, regardless of their origin and socioeconomic positions, had to be allowed to participate in the country’s economic growth. Again in 1995, the DP (Democratic Party) was the second opposition party to adopt the idea of indigenization of the economy in its political agenda. Re-appropriating the term *uzawa*, its leader, Reverend Christopher Mtikila, intended to implement a radical policy involving a strict control of companies owned by non-Africans. Known for his extremist views and his demagogic oratory skills (Prunier 1998, Crozon 1998), Mtikila contributed greatly to radicalize the political concept of *uzawa*. While the period that followed seemed to mark a halt in the rise of xenophobic sentiments, the publication of a pamphlet in 2003 signed by Iddi Simba (former Minister of Industry and Commerce, Member of Parliament and of the Central Committee of the ruling party *Chama Cha Mapinduzi*, or CCM) revived anti-foreigners’ mobilization, taking up again the main proposals for indigenization developed by other party

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- (42) The Swahili term *uzawa* defines identity resulting from a community of birth, territorial membership and cultural references. Translated into English by “nativeness” or “indigenoussness”, *uzawa* used to refer to a sense of belonging to extended families or clans. After independence, *uzawa* was more broadly used to refer to ethnicity. Through a semantic shift, the term has become synonymous with “being African” in general. It should be noted however that this new inclusive identity has actually become much more restrictive, being associated with skin colour. Black Africans are the only ones who could claim to be *wazawa* (*mzawa* in singular), that is to say, indigenous or native bearers of *uzawa*. Finally, during the period under consideration here, the term *uzawa* came to designate the process through which Black Africans could strengthen their presence in numbers and capital income in the national economic and financial sectors.
- (43) Augustine Mrema is the current chairman of the TLP (Tanzania Labour Party).

leaders earlier: easier access to bank loans for “natives”, natives’ priority in the purchase of parastatals, etc. By giving preference to citizens of African descent, discrimination based on origin (if not on skin colour) was promoted very openly. Non-African foreigners (including non-Tanzanian Indians), as well as Tanzanians of Indian origin were not only excluded from economic and commercial positions, but were also held responsible for the country’s underdevelopment that primarily affected Africans (Nagar 2000).

It is thus notable that over the years and according to its proponents, the *uzawa* policy took on quite different meanings. In the early years when these issues were discussed, opposition parties were concerned about distinguishing *uzawa* and ethnic or racial discrimination⁴⁴. However, a radical change in the use of this term was initiated by some opposition party leaders or by members of the ruling party, who were promoters of a binary conception of economic development: foreign investment was presented as synonymous with foreign invasion and exploitation that poor citizens would not be able to contain. A second shift occurred when the categories of “foreigners” and “nationals” were explicitly defined: foreigners were holders of foreign passports (mainly Europeans and South Africans), as well as residents of Indian origin who were either Tanzanian citizens or not; only native Africans were considered genuine citizens. The racial overtones of these definitions were further radicalized after Reverend Mtikila introduced the term *gabacholi* (meaning “thief” in Gujarati language) into the public space to refer to Indian large businessmen and traders, thus giving credence to the systematic association between immigrants of Indian origin and predatory behaviours (Crozon 1998).

The *uzawa* policy did not only have unanimous support in Tanzania, but sparked off heated debates, including in the media (Bancet 2004). Many intellectuals and journalists declared that promoting *uzawa* would strengthen collusion between politics and business to the extent that politicians, who were businessmen at the same time, were aiming at granting themselves a free hand in operations of privatization and speculations of all kinds. Others argued that in supporting *uzawa*, politicians and opposition political parties were trying to win the votes of small-scale local private entrepreneurs. For its part, the Tanzanian government, in the name of the founding values of unity and equality

(44) Thus, during his political meeting in Bukoba in May 1995, Mrema insisted that indigenization and apartheid should not be confused (Bancet 2004).

inscribed in the constitution, reacted strongly by declaring the term *uzawa* unlawful, any violation of the ban being punishable. Meant to discredit opposition parties in the eyes of the national and international democratic opinion, this purely legalistic reaction was also an effective strategy aimed to retain the support of Indian large entrepreneurs who contributed financially to CCM electoral campaigns under the counter, also paying bribes or providing private financial services⁴⁵. Furthermore, the official authorities could take an additional advantage in transforming Tanzanians of Indo-Pakistani origin into scapegoats and making them responsible for all ills afflicting the country, thus diverting public attention from the ruling elite's political logic of accumulation and patronage, as well as from the increase in cases of grand corruption (Fouéré 2008).

Giving the lie to prejudices propagated by *uzawa* proponents, economic development attests that from the 1990s, several leading entrepreneurs of African descent established themselves in the Tanzanian social landscape. An herald of African capitalism, Reginald A. Mengi, the owner and chairman of IPP Media Group, is a good example of successful African entrepreneurship⁴⁶. Former chairman of the National Board of Business Accountants and Auditors, Mengi is the current chairman of the Confederation of Tanzania Industries (CTI) and participates (directly or through the newspapers of his group) in many philanthropic activities as the Commissioner of the Tanzania Commission for AIDS (TACAIDS) and the chairman of the Poverty Alleviation and Environmental Committee (PAEC) or of the National Environment Management Council (NEMC). Besides a few high profile African personalities, there is also a whole world of small-scale African

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- (45) A business manager of Asian origin, whose name was not released, generously offered to contribute to the wedding costs of former president Benjamin Mkapa's daughter. The latter declined for fear of the scandal which might have ensued. The nature of ties maintained between some African politicians and Asian businessmen as well as the amounts involved are kept secret, only revealed in exceptional circumstances in connection with scandals exposed by the press. This was the case of the "Goldenberg diamonds" scandal in Kenya which damaged the reputation of a few Asian businessmen and several African political leaders in the 1990s (Grignon 1996, Prunier 1998, Otyeno 1998). Such events undermine the reputation of African Asians as a whole.
- (46) IPP Media brings together financial advisory services, bottling plants in partnership with Coca Cola, care products plants and a wide range of media including eleven newspapers, three radio stations and a television station operating in Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya. The IPP Media Group newspapers include *The Guardian*, *The Sunday Observer*, *The Daily Mail*, *Financial Times* published in English; *Nipashe*, *Nipashe Jumapili*, *Alasiri*, *Kasheshe* and *Taiifa Letu* published in Swahili. The IPP Media Group also owns ITV television channel (*Independent Television Ltd*) as well as *Radio One*, *Radio Uhuru* and *East Africa Radio* stations.

traders who are well represented in the commercial hub of Kariakoo in Dar es Salaam today. Formerly a concentration of Indo-Pakistani commercial activities (Vassanji 1994), Uhuru Street in Kariakoo has changed considerably due to the arrival of many small-scale African traders. The new socio-economic realities in Tanzania are therefore extremely complex, far from the popular belief that reduces them to clear-cut oppositions between Indian merchants and entrepreneurs on the one hand and exploited African employees and workers on the other. Moreover, the indigenization of the economy as a policy was never seriously considered nor planned. A close look at it shows that the *uzawa* slogan was primarily used among politicians who played the card of national or ethnic affiliations to gain electoral support. It is therefore no wonder that public debates over indigenization have silenced after ten years since they appeared, even if the underlying issues of economic empowerment and national identity are still both relevant and sensitive. However, the fact remains that its emergence in Tanzanian politics contributed to reinforcing identity stereotypes.

Being Indo-Tanzanian and African-Tanzanian in Dar es Salaam today

The sharp divisions between communities which have developed throughout the history of Tanzania are still relevant in collective consciousness today. Internalized identity categories have an impact on daily intercommunity relations, influencing people's expectations and attitudes, which in turn contributes to reconducting these categories at the micro level. Face-to-face interviews, informal conversations and observations in the field bring to light existing economic and identity tensions that cut across Tanzanian society and are a significant key to understand how it is shaped today.

Cultivating a sense of Indian belonging

In the city of Dar es Salaam, the history of Indian presence is inscribed on the walls. The city centre features old buildings and houses of Anglo-Indian style with screened facades and finely-worked front walls bearing the names of their builders. The former divisions between the western part of the city (Hindu) and the eastern part (Muslim) still exist. This bipolarization results from the fact that Indian communities give priority to proximity to places of worship and schools as well as to intra-community residency. In the western part of the city centre, for example, Hindu temples of different communities (Jains, Swaminarayan, Bathia,

Lohana), community associations and Hindu schools now open to a wider public are concentrated on Kisutu Street. Towards the ocean, people from diverse origins (Indo-Pakistani, Arabic, Comorian, Afro-Shirazi) live in the Muslim area with the Sunni and Shia mosques at its centre. Almost exclusively Indo-Pakistanis go to the mosques built by the Bohra and Aga Khan Ismaili communities, as only very few Africans are followers of these religious affiliations. The former power of the Aga Khan Ismaili Muslims is attested by the huge colonial-style building on Mosque Street, which still houses the community's association activities. The vast majority of families of Indian origin send their children to private schools near the centre, such as the Aga Khan primary and secondary schools, Hindu schools of Kisutu street or Al Muntazir Islamic school, or the International School of Tanganyika, a private school that admits children from privileged families (diplomats, expatriates, politicians and big businessmen). The search for quality education that public schools cannot offer (Bonini 2003) and the desire to preserve and enhance social and cultural identity of their own explain the existence of community-based schools.

Recent trends combine with historical developments to give the city centre of Dar es Salaam a special cachet. Shops, bureaux de change, mini supermarkets, restaurants, tea rooms and Internet cafés are mostly owned by managers of Indo-Pakistani origin. Small restaurants offer traditional Indian snacks, such as *chapati*, *sambusa* or *bhajia* (croquettes made from dry bean flour), commonly integrated into the Tanzanian cuisine, or *farari petis*, *sabudanawada* or *batata wada*⁴⁷ only found in Indian cuisine, as well as full dishes and candies that are not available in other parts of the city. Hindu women wearing the *sari*, Bohra women wearing the *burka*⁴⁸ or younger Indian women of all affiliation dressed like Europeans usually purchase fruits and vegetables from the small refined open market located on Zanaki Street. In the middle of the afternoon, African nannies can be seen holding the hands of Indian schoolchildren returning from school or going for their extra curricula school activities. In other words, the city centre is a microcosm of India that, at first glance, seems inherited straight from the colonial period.

(47) These names refer to spiced French fries mixed with onions (*sabudanawada* and *farari petis*) or potatoes (*batata wada*).

(48) The Bohra *burka* bears little resemblance to the dress of the same name worn by Muslim women, composed of a long black overcoat covering the body from head to toe. Indeed, the Bohra *burka* is a set of two pieces of fabric in pastel shades, one being a sleeveless top matched with a hood meant to cover hair, the other a long skirt reaching to the ankles.

Urban segregation is still community-based. Indeed, a vast majority of houses in the city centre are still the property of the National Housing Corporation (NHC). Residents, sometimes the original owners of these houses, pay rent to the state. Some families are crammed into dilapidated homes rather than being forced to leave. Until now, strategies for living as one community easily discouraged non-Indians to settle downtown. The practices of subletting rather than termination of leases and overcharging of subleases are common. They facilitate an insidious selection of tenants along community lines. For example in Upanga, a neighbourhood adjacent to the city centre inhabited by a majority of Indian immigrants, the same segregation practices based on price and maintenance of family and community networks can be observed. As for the richest families, they have taken up residence on the peninsula of Oyster Bay, a large residential area shared by European expatriates and wealthy business or political families of Indo-Pakistani, Arab or African origin. Today, however, residents of the city centre and Kariakoo are forced to cope with the sale of NHC-owned houses built at the beginning of the 20th century. Many former owners do not have sufficient capital to buy their homes, and some complain that buildings are being sold secretly. New owners, commonly identified as Zanzibaris or Arabs, acquire these houses, destroy them and replace them with brand new several-storey buildings, cheap replicas of the architectural style of the Arabian Peninsula (Calas 2006). There are numerous tragic stories of families who helplessly witness their family homes being repurchased and destroyed.

The frequentation of social areas also reflects Indian withdrawal from the rest of the society. There is no doubt that differences in standards of living influence, first and foremost, the choice of entertainment spots in town. Hotels and chic restaurants of the peninsula (*Seacliff*, *Golden Tulip*) are frequented by businessmen, traders, bankers or high level government officials regardless of their origin. The children of the local bourgeoisie are found in high-class nightclubs of the city (*Garden Bistro*). However, there are preferences following community lines. Associations attached to the various religious communities consist of active sports clubs, entertainment groups for women and youth movements. Depending on their socio-economic status, Indians hang out in private clubs, the city's main Indian restaurants (*Anghiti*, *Village Grill*, *Khana Khazana*), and the coastal hotels on the North of Dar es Salaam (*White Sands*, *Jangwani*); or enjoy *tandoori* chicken in small restaurants and on the city centre's sidewalks which are filled with tables

and plastic chairs in the evening. On the other hand, local bars and nightclubs of the suburbs, where warm beer, grilled chicken and beef, even pork (*kitimoto*), are consumed while listening to the local Swahili hip-hop (*bongo flava*) latest hits or standards of Congolese music are preferred by Tanzanians of African origin.

The way people make use of Coco Beach on the Masaki Peninsula on Saturday and Sunday evenings illustrates to what extent divisions between communities are entrenched in Tanzanian society. A tacit bipartition seems to have established itself over time. The sandy part of the beach is used by young African Tanzanians who come from the suburbs of the city to swim, participate in fairground games and hang around in the only bar on the beach. Here they relax as they listen to local hip-hop or techno music, sip a soda or a beer, eat kebabs and chips as they play pool. However on the south of the beach, the sand gives way to a small coral cliff overlooking the ocean by a metre or two. This is where small fast-food stands get concentrated at the end of the afternoon, attracting an almost exclusively Indian clientele. Sitting together at a table or on mats as they drink soda, families enjoy *Zanzibar Mix* (also known as *urojo* in Swahili), a warm soup containing chunks of cassava chips, *bhajia* and small pieces of meat, or nibble bites of salted and spicy fried cassava as they watch the sunset. Many remain in their cars, parked across the road along Coco Beach or even on the lawn, near the tables and mats where families relax. Indo-Pakistanis obviously give priority to residential segregation and sociability within their own community.

Stereotypes, construction of the Other and self-construction

Social and urban segregation that currently characterizes the relationship between Tanzanian Indians and Africans is the product of old socioeconomic asymmetries of power as well as of a more recent history of political ostracization, economic witch-hunts and strategies of exclusion. Drawing upon sharp binary social representations, segregation contributes to the endless reproduction of identity categories.

For many Africans, wealth and miserliness go hand in hand among Indians. The preconceived idea that all Indians are rich, through their trading activities, remains resilient despite a multifaceted reality consisting not merely of wealthy traders, but also of teachers and civil servants of modest means, shopkeepers who cannot make ends meet at the end of the month, and humble artisans. Although they are a

minority in their own communities, some families of Indian origin even owe their survival to the philanthropy of their fellow-believers. As for the incriminating cliché concerning miserliness (and exploitation of neighbours), it is a very general stereotype applied elsewhere in the world to many business minorities like the European Jewry or the West African Lebanese for instance. It is obvious that the influence of Indian immigrants on urban economy is still strong today. In spite of the recent and spectacular growth of small and medium African businesses in Dar es Salaam above-mentioned, the majority of businessmen are people of Indian origin. Apart from Internet cafés run by young Indo-Pakistanis, most businesses employ African staff as waiters, cooks, tailors, vendors or guards. In residential apartments, domestic workers are also African. All of them complain about low wages, usually insufficient for a living. Figures vary, not only depending on profession and skills, but also on employers themselves. According to the employees interviewed for this study, these figures would range from 10,000 to 20,000 shillings for house help staff and between 30,000 and 50,000 shillings for other workers, that is, between 6 and 35 euros per month⁴⁹. In comparison to African bosses, big bosses of Indian origin are said to pay their employees badly.

Prevalent stereotypes about Africans among many Tanzanian Indians are the exact opposite of those used by Africans to describe Indians. According to Indians, the prevalence of poverty among Africans is due to the latter's laziness; for this reason, they would not deserve sympathy. Africans would be able to work adequately only if they are urged to do so, reprimanded, or even insulted. Indians highly condemn laziness because work is an important value to them. Some respondents pointed out that the first Indian immigrants in colonial Tanganyika worked hard to acquire and then maintain or develop their capital. Others recalled the measures taken against capitalists during the socialist period to highlight the importance of financial accumulation through work and protection against political hazards⁵⁰. Unlike the Indo-Pakistanis who consider themselves honest in business, Africans are frequently described as thieves, either by nature or by necessity, in addition to being lazy and profiteers. As a result, African staff members rarely have access to the cash desk in shops and restaurants.

These mutually stereotyped "social caricatures" (Brennan 2012) of behaviours at work lead to the adoption of similarly stereotyped

(49) 2006-2008 figures.

(50) In this regard, see also the work of Lobo (2000) consisting of a compilation of life histories of Indian families settled in Tanzania, as well as Oonk (2004).

behaviours as well as produce a tacit ethnic hierarchy. Respondents presented several examples taken from daily experience as evidence that such a hierarchy exists in the minds of Tanzanians of Indian origin. It is said that in a shop, an African is always served after an Indian, an Arab or a white man, regardless of the order in which they arrived; he will always wait, even without a good reason. According to Indians, an African does not look for taste in food and would therefore be happy with a badly prepared meal so long as the stomach is filled. An Indian would always condescend to an African, even when both of them have the same level of education⁵¹. Indians would not take public transport to avoid mixing with Africans. Swahili being considered an inferior language, Indians would not make much effort to speak it just to highlight that they are different, even superior.

When questioned, most Indians in Dar es Salaam not only deny the existence of such an ethnic hierarchy, but also refute the condescending and contemptuous behaviours attributed to them. The comments they make to their staff would be those of any employer reprimanding an employee for misconduct or incompetence. Rather, philanthropic activities in which many personalities of the Indian community are engaged would bear witness to their compassion for the poor African people and their involvement in the country's development. The opening of Indian private schools and hospitals to the general public, without racial or community discrimination, is highlighted to point to the absence of practices of exclusion. In short, except for a few bad examples, Indians as a whole would treat Africans with due respect. Finally, references to the national ideals of multiculturalism and multiracialism, which are recurrently made to support Indian interviewees' claims for the legitimacy of their presence in Tanzania, explicitly underline that Indian populations are exemplary Tanzanian citizens

In this mish-mash of identity stereotypes and clichés, together with varied personal experiences, incessant rumours, memories of past events and resentments reinforced by recurrent political attacks, any attempt to separate truth from fiction, or reality from lies is already doomed to fail. Indeed, the production of essentialist imaginaries about the 'Other' points to the force of institutionalization and incorporation of distinctions between social groups, maintained by ethnic and racial clichés. These distinctions are inscribed in the physical space and in the

(51) An African teacher pointed to existing racist attitudes towards Africans, testifying that he used to tutor an Indo-Pakistani student in the garage adjacent to their house, instead of the living room or the office.

division of labour. At the same time, they are part of common sense and are taken for granted. They are therefore considered legitimate and unquestionable (Bourdieu 1980). Despite the changes mentioned above, objective living conditions constantly separate Africans and Indians; the representations of the Other that ensue from them play a significant role in sustaining socioeconomic and community hierarchies. “Africans” and “Indians” are signifiers referring to two distinct socio-cultural entities, each presupposing the internal cohesion and homogeneity of the other. These categories which guide ways of being and ways of doing in situations of direct interaction are sustained through routinely usages or even deliberately maintained in the public space and in the media. More nuanced statements are held by individuals who, through their positions in the economic, political or educated spheres, straddle the statutory barriers and asymmetrical power relations that characterize the usual relationship between these two virtually conflicting entities. In the places of production of the national elite, such as schools and university campuses, as well as in the spaces of the economic, political and intellectual power, where the patterns of encounter between people cease to be strictly hierarchical and localized, common reproduction mechanisms of a radically different otherness lose their effectiveness. Many stories illustrate the porosity of identity boundaries: friendship developed without considering community origin, higher rate of mixed marriages (but unfortunately, this could not be measured), rejection of identification with “Indianness” or “Africanness” in favour of national identity and Tanzanian citizenship. In other words, in social settings where statutory and economic barriers lose their relevance, social and identity rapprochement between Africans and Indians are notable, even though a majority continue to look unfavourably on such social and cultural rapprochement.

A Case Study: Indians and Africans in Aga Khan’s Ismaili schools

Schools that belong to the Aga Khan⁵² Ismaili community were established on the East African coast at the beginning of the 20th century. Records indicate that the first school was founded in Bagamoyo in 1895 (Roy 2006: 202). However, the year 1905, marking the opening

(52) The Aga Khan Ismaili, also known as Nizarites or Aga Khanists (Adam 2002, Morris 1958), are Shia Muslims who converted to Hinduism. They came from the Middle East and settled in India from the 14th century. Sultan Mohammed Shah Aga Khan is the 49th Imam of the Ismaili community. See the chapter written by Colette Le Cour Grandmaison in this book.

of a private secondary school for girls in Zanzibar, was chosen as the official date for the inaugural celebration of the centenary of Aga Khan schools in 2005. At the time of their establishment, these private schools were intended to fill a gap in urban public⁵³ schools. They also constituted a way of opposing discrimination in education imposed by the colonial system. Since then, several Ismaili schools were opened in Dar es Salaam: a nursery school (Aga Khan Nursery School, AKNS), a primary school (Aga Khan Primary School, AKPS) and a secondary school (Mzizima Secondary School, AKMSS). A Medical University affiliated with the Aga Khan Hospital was added to these educational institutions. All these facilities are located in Upanga neighbourhood. Plans have been underway to establish a campus (known as Academy⁵⁴) not far from the University of Dar es Salaam, comprising all academic buildings. The laying of the foundation stone took place in March 2005 in the presence of the Aga Khan and former President of Tanzania, Benjamin Mkapa. This school project is part of a general redeployment of the Ismaili community activities in East Africa and in the world at large⁵⁵.

The Aga Khan schools are places of production and reproduction of the Tanzanian elite, the majority being Indian. Originally established for children belonging to the Ismaili community, they later opened doors to other Indo-Pakistani communities. All the same, Ismaili children still have priority when it comes to admission and indigent Ismaili families are helped financially. Aga Khan schools also host a few African students, mostly Tanzanians, but also of foreign origin (Ugandans and Kenyans). Among these African students, many of them are teachers' children as one child per teacher is entitled to free education. The

(53) At the time, mission schools were mostly found in rural areas and their objectives were to educate and evangelize African masses (Buchert 1994).

(54) The establishment of Aga Khan Academies (places comprising primary and secondary schools, sometimes universities) is part of a vast program of creation of an integrated network of private schools started in 2000. The first group of such schools was opened in Mombasa in 2003. Apart from Dar es Salaam, other Academies are planned to be established by 2013 in the following cities: Nairobi, Kinshasa, Antananarivo, Bamako, Maputo, Kampala, Kabul, Osh (Kyrgyzstan), Khorog (Tajikistan), Dushanbe (Tajikistan), Damascus, Salamieh (Syria), Dhaka (Bangladesh), Mumbai, Hyderabad and Karachi.

(55) The Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) was founded by the Aga Khan in order to promote the growth of a Muslim social conscience. The network strives to promote activities without discrimination based on gender, origin, religion or political affiliation. Within this AKDN network, the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) contributes to the maintenance and renovation of old buildings and public buildings considered a local heritage. In Zanzibar, AKTC funded the renovation of the old Ithnasheri dispensary built in the 1890s by the Ismaili merchant Tharia Topan. AKTC also contributed to the rehabilitation of the Forodhani public square on the seafront of Stone Town.

relationship between students follows patterns of hierarchy and distancing present in Tanzanian society. Thus, *in situ* observations of social interactions between Mzizima High School students revealed the existing dichotomy between Africans and Indians. In the classroom as well as in the playground, students generally gather together based on community criteria, together with criteria of gender and social origin. Indo-Pakistani students fill the whole classroom while those of African origin tend to cluster around a few desks, boys on one side and girls on the other. Among the Indo-Pakistani students, social origin or community membership plays an important role. Several young girls described how friendship was based on their parents' socioeconomic status even though they belonged to the same socio-religious community. Children from mixed marriages are generally grouped with students of African descent in the classroom, but tend to stick together during free time. Teachers attest that they had trouble organizing joint activities, some students refusing to hold hand with African students.

Among the staff working at school, similar spatial divisions can be observed. At lunchtime, Hindu women are the first to go to the refectory. Then African women, African men and men of Indian origin arrive in small groups and sit separately. European administrative staff and the few Ismaili interns of Canadian nationality tend to stay apart. The same divisions based on community and gender can be seen during meetings, assemblies and school celebrations. However, some individuals or groups get along with these different groups more easily. This is the case with some men of Indian origin who are fluent in Swahili and are seemingly at ease in both worlds: Indian and African. African women constitute the most mobile group because they fit as Africans among Africans and are more accepted as women among women of Indian origin. As expected, the strongest divide is observed between African men and Indian women, who rarely interact directly. The school staff insist that negative statements about people of different origin are never heard. However, some African teachers attested to having heard racist remarks from senior administrative staff in private. Implied accusations of laziness and incompetence are said to be rampant in this paternalistic organization.

Ceremonies organized for the staff are not immune to the rules of separation that have developed in Aga Khan schools. Thus, the 2005-2006 school year ended with a prize-giving ceremony in recognition of years of service in the school. The ceremony was organized at Diamond

Jubilee Hall⁵⁶. The hall was decorated for the occasion and tables accommodating between six and ten people had been put in place. The ceremony included a series of entertainment shows prepared by the staff, a speech by an official of the Central Educational Service (Aga Khan Education Services Tanzania, AKEST), awarding of certificates and gift vouchers as a reward for years of service, and dinner. Since no measures had been taken regarding the arrangement of the staff invited for dinner, the staff took their seats based on the usual groupings of community origin and gender. During the shows, African staff proposed a song in Swahili that included the famous hymn “*Nakupenda Tanzania*” (Tanzania, I love you), a hackneyed patriotic refrain in praise of Tanzania. On the other hand, Hindu women had prepared traditional dances performed in *saris*. The presence of some Indian women in the group of the Swahili singers and one African woman in the group of Hindu dancers could not dispel the obvious polarization of these activities. During dinner, negative comments from African teachers and assistants, who were expecting traditional Tanzanian cuisine⁵⁷, were recurring for the reason that only Indian dishes in spicy sauce were served. These words of protests, combined with a strong disappointment about the value of gift vouchers, fuelled dissatisfaction and feeling of lack of recognition for the work accomplished by the African staff.

Practices of segregation that underpin interactions between staff of African descent and staff of Indian origin partly result from asymmetrical power relations developed in the school. The administrative staff managing the school is predominantly Ismaili while a majority of teachers are African. This asymmetry is interpreted by some African teachers as discrimination in employment. The few positions of administration and management allocated to non-Indians do not satisfy people who resent discrimination against Africans. To the teaching staff, the appointment of Ismaili staff in positions of management of school equipment and the scrupulous monitoring of this equipment are proof that Africans are perceived with suspicion, viewed as thieves and profiteers. Moreover, in primary school, only Indian female teachers are put in charge of classes of the highest grades while African female

(56) The Diamond Jubilee Hall was built in 1997 by the Aga Khan network in Malik Street, in the Upanga neighbourhood. It can be rented for exhibitions, concerts, conferences, fashion shows and private parties.

(57) It is to be noted that cookery is highly controversial. Aga Khan schools use the services of a caterer for lunch. Any change in the composition of a typical Tanzanian meal leads to numerous complaints from the African staff. As a consequence, no dishes of the Indian culinary tradition are served.

teachers are implicitly excluded from them. In addition to these informal practices in job allocation, salary inequality has been harshly criticized by the African staff. Significant differences in salary exist even when the post and the applicants' experience are the same. Upon their hiring, some European teachers requested and received higher wages. These facts are known despite the general opacity surrounding salaries scales. They have prompted Africans to join hands in feeling that they are not simply underpaid, but are also explicitly treated as a lower class because, as expressed by an African teacher, they are "always treated as the house keepers of Indians".

The introduction of new teaching methods openly led to tensions which were usually voiced only among members of the same racial group. Since 2005, the Aga Khan schools have begun a transition to become International Schools. This change in status necessitated school restructuring, especially a shift from the Tanzanian national curriculum, followed since the establishment of these schools, to the International Baccalaureate Curriculum which is imposed by the International Baccalaureate Organization and whose proper implementation is to be confirmed after inspection. The first signs of discontent among African teachers emerged after the dismissal of some colleagues and the hiring of foreign personnel from India, Zambia, Uganda, Kenya and Europe. However, the fear of being dismissed limited teachers' protests. Increased monitoring of the work of teachers, in advance of and during classes, was badly received but accepted with resignation as a necessary step in the restructuring of the school. Sharp reactions from African teachers were observed during trainings and seminars organized to introduce the staff with changes in teaching methods. Presented by trainers from the United States or Great Britain, these new teaching methods which no longer consist in providing children with pre-packaged knowledge but in promoting inquiry-based teaching, raised much concern among teachers. Compelled to get rid of teaching practices suddenly declared outdated, if not harmful to children, teachers feared they might be judged incompetent by a school which had previously expressed its confidence in the quality of their teaching. In this atmosphere where professional skills were questioned – and exacerbated by a wave of dismissals without notice – the African staff felt that the administration evaluated them not merely on the basis of strict professional skills, but also along identity lines.

The administration of Aga Khan schools and the relationship that has developed between staff members provide a good vantage point

to illuminate broader divisions that split Tanzanian urban society. In this school microcosm, not only are social divisions replayed between people who incorporated the operational modes of a segregated society, but local struggles also reproduce the differential perceptions of community categories.

Conclusion

In Tanzania, identity clichés and stereotypes that circulate about Indians and Africans point to the institutionalization and incorporation of identity category distinctions. These essentialist identities, which are now part of a popular discourse about culture and race, are the products of historical construction rooted in early precolonial local divisions and structures of hierarchy; they also owe deeply to the legal ordering and workings of colonial rule since the mid-19th century. The colonial policies adopted, notably with the urban ordering of the cities, and socioeconomic developments that affected the country drew almost impermeable boundaries between Indians and Africans in order to make Tanzania “a Black man’s country” (Ilfie 1979: 262). The decades following Tanzania’s independence entrenched these barriers, making Indians “vulnerable to scapegoating” and underlining their “essential foreignness” (Brennan 2012: 8, 22). Indeed, the socialist ideology of nation-building contributed to the stigmatization of Indians, considered heinous exploiters of the poor and powerless African mass. Regarded as a minority of “insiders and outsiders”, Indians self-built as a foreign minority by maintaining identity specificities through the strengthening of collective consciousness and the preservation of imported socio-cultural attributes, though strong feelings of belonging to the Tanzanian nation developed upon which their claims to national loyalty and citizenship have been grounded until today.

Today, despite the emergence of a black African middle-class, differences in cultures and lifestyles between Africans and Indians as well as persisting deep-rooted social representations of hierarchy and distinction contribute to the daily reproduction of identity hierarchies and social distancing. Regularly reconducted in the public space, in politics and in the media, often fuelled by personal experiences, rumours, past memories and political claims, these relations of power are at the same time concrete, perceived and imagined. They influence people’s expectations and attitudes in common situations of interaction. Instead of breaking up the social hierarchies and imaginaries which have crystallized until today, daily social contacts and exchanges tend

to reconduct them. Therefore, outside close elite circles in which living conditions, socioeconomic interests and a sense of social and education distinction from the rest of the mass bring people of all origin together, bridges between the African world and the Indian world appear to be virtually non-existent.

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Nakupenda Tanzania (Tanzania, I love you)

Tanzania, Tanzania, nakupenda kwa moyo wote, (Tanzania, Tanzania, I love you with all my heart)

Nchi yangu Tanzania, jina lako ni tamu sana, (My country Tanzania, your name is so sweet)

Nilalapo nakuwaza wewe, (When I sleep, I dream about you)

Niamkapo ni heri sana ee! (In fact, it is happiness when I wake up)

Tanzania, Tanzania, nakupenda kwa moyo wote. (Tanzania, Tanzania, I love you with all my heart).

Indians and Others: Worlds Unknown to Each Other –Extracts of reports from the Kenyan press

Michel ADAM

The Brahman Hinduist perception of the external world is characterized by preventing contact and selective avoidance, illustrated by the banning – actually caricature-like and not much respected – of crossing the seas for fear of exposing oneself to the risk of uncontrolled contamination. Maintained by the practice of endogamy in the community (sometimes mistaken for endogamy within a caste) and by other measures of relational restrictions (such as supervision of commensality), these restrictions, of a strictly social and religious nature, have frequently been likened, but often wrongly, to xenophobic behaviour (or even racist) when they were undoubtedly particular socio-religious manifestations that were complex in nature, coupled with a truly universal¹ ethnocentric behaviour. Moreover, it is worth noting that these representations did not stand in the way of the very important emigration of Indian populations. Eventually, they did not even prevent intermarriage and intercultural intermingling, as is the case in Mascareignes and the Caribbean.

(1) The nationalist and xenophobic ideas developed in India by the right wing of the BJP or other extreme right parties were hardly heard of in the diaspora. For those who believe in these values, non-Indian cultures are seen as primitive epigones of humanity, with the European technical superiority being balanced with their moral consumption and religious retardation. These views perpetuate the millenarian vision of Bengali Netaji (Subhas Chandra Bose), an admirer of the Nazis who died in a plane accident in 1945.

In East Africa, relations between Indians and representatives of the African or European populations have in addition suffered from the colonial situation, which gave birth to reciprocal prejudices coupled with attitudes of mistrust and sometimes hostility. Held under European dominion but placed in socially dominant positions in relation to Africans, the Indians all the more easily adopted the prejudice of the former that they agreed, at least partially, with the hierarchic division that is peculiar to the caste system. Africans were confined to a culture that involves close contact and primary manipulation of organic nature (plant and especially animal and human). They were considered hunters, animal slaughterers, consumers of meat, blood and other impure foods and held in low esteem by European colonizers since they occupied subordinate ranks. Thus, in Africa, Africans were in a way doomed to occupy a position comparable to that of inferior castes in India or more of outcastes ('untouchables' and tribal populations) to which they resembled through certain traits (immoderate consumption of meat products, sacrifices involving blood, several manual tasks involving frequent contact with dirty substances). Even today, many Hindu families cannot withstand immolation of poultry or even the smell of roast meat on *barbecues*² among possible African neighbours.

Terms formerly used by Indians to describe Africans – though they are now a taboo – were *habshani* (a sort of ogre or bogeyman used to scare children)³ or even *kala-kala* ("black-black"), the black colour being systematically disparaged as is also the case in matrimonial matters when it comes to choosing a spouse. While these prejudices have nowadays tended to disappear – particularly in the new generation, Indians used to establish distinctions between the African ethnic groups, without even knowing that these distinctions had been inherited from colonial caricatures born in European circles. This explains why the Somali (also Muslim, but nevertheless kept at a distance because of their supposed warlike nature), the Swahili (also Muslim and Arabised), and the Maasai (although occasional consumers of cattle blood) obtained a superior status in the eyes of Indians. As a counterpoint to the multiple biases, and without going up to the extent of exogamic behaviours as mentioned in a preceding chapter, it is noteworthy that many Indian

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- (2) For a Hindu vegetarian, explains Neera Kapur Dromson, a carnivorous consumer is not a consumer of meat but of "flesh", a term associated with an act of violence against a living being. The latter thus transmits the evil flow of vengeance to whoever exposes himself to devouring a piece of himself (Kapur Dromson 2008: 318).
- (3) Kapur-Dromson 2007: 2.

families are currently employing African cooks, even if it means sometimes restricting them to the preparation of accompaniments and desserts while the preparation of the main dish is done by the woman of the house⁴.

It has been pointed out in the introductory chapter of this book that, living close to them for more than a century – and sometimes even more for Creole families – Indians have borrowed very little from African cultures. Except for some cases (Ahmadiyya or Ismailia - who had only very little success in their venture), Indians have not further sought to convert Africans to their own religions, particularly Hinduism, as this type of conversion is never envisaged in India. However, it happened that a Hindu Lohana expert based in Nakuru (Hirji Baba) exceptionally started converting Africans, mainly Gikuyu and Luo in 1960s. Having acquired Indian names, these new followers equally adopted other traits of the Hindu culture, clothes, nutrition (vegetarianism) and even usage of Gujarati language. Their number never exceeded a dozen people.

For some decades now, the Indians' perception of Africans has undergone major revisions. Economic leaders of the diaspora can denounce abuse of dominant positions sometimes committed by heads of companies of Indian origin⁵. Today, there are many examples of business associations and professional partnerships which are successful and long lasting, without mentioning the friendly or sometimes even matrimonial relations that may be established during these partnerships or in other contexts of social life. However, as shown by Marie-Aude Fouéré in this book and as already previously discussed, such an evolution encounters some obstacles, both social and political⁶.

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- (4) This change of attitude came at a time when African servants were not even allowed to fill up a carafe of drinking water. Similar prejudices were also applied to Europeans. An old person of Brahman origin known to the author reports that during their childhood, their father forced them to take a bath whenever circumstances of daily life had led them to shake hands with a European. Other informants report having been subjected to the same ritual of purification after simply having looked at or smelled raw meat.
 - (5) It could be mentioned that the already old memorandum of 1st March 1986 in which the members of the national Chamber of commerce and industry of Kenya (with a Kenyan Indian majority) established a list of reprehensible behaviours by some Indian manufacturers and wholesalers: 1) refusal of payment within 90 days; 2) refusal to deliver goods in case of damage to the stocks belonging to certain retailers (African); 3) higher billing for African retailers; 4) higher commercial leases to the detriment of African retailers (Warah 1998:39)
 - (6) Concerning intercommunity antagonism, it is worth mentioning the one pitting Indian businessmen on the Kenyan coast (Mombasa to Malindi) against Somali businessmen, several of them having withdrawn to this part of Kenya. Traffickers and countless businessmen are thus mixed up in the same opprobrium, with Indians accusing the Somalis of trafficking (drugs, arms) and engaging in property speculation, particularly by

The Africans' perception of Indians

Among Africans, a simplistic and globalizing view of Indians persists, without knowing their religious and cultural differences. The term "Indian" is inclusive and brings out a necessarily depreciative and unfriendly image to a certain number of Africans. In fact, for decades, having lost access to land and communicating with the African peasantry only through the authoritative voice of a policeman or a government official (*babu*)⁷, or even through mercenary means of small businesses that were more frequent, the majority of Indians gave an alternating double image of themselves corresponding to the two functions assigned by European settlers: on the one hand, agents of colonial power; on the other, insensitive and rapacious shopkeepers.

These caricature perceptions left strong marks on people's mind. After the colonial period, Africans commonly referred to Indians using the term *banyan*, a name of Gujarati origin meaning "merchant". Nowadays, Africans have a tendency to describe Indians as individuals destined by nature or in essence to business. This perception goes along with the usual stereotypes associated with professions attached to making profits: deception of customers, disproportionate gains, resorting to usurious forms of credit (which is actually avoided or even strongly condemned by a majority of Indians of Muslim faith). This being the case, the majority of Africans do not know that a good number of Indian immigrants come from rural families practicing agriculture in their countries of origin and that some of them opted for business careers *by default* after the British settlers were opposed to their settlement as agriculturalists.

In an article published in 1974 in the *Journal of African Studies*, the African historian M. Nyaggah attempted to put together a collection of grievances presented to representatives of Indian communities by Africans (Nyaggah 1974: 205-233).

buying at a low price in order to demolish houses in the old Mombasa town. Considered as unruly tenants, the Somalis are equally (and paradoxically) considered responsible for the high increase in rent. Unfair competition presents another frequent accusation, the Somalis being accused of importing smuggled goods especially from Dubai and Bangkok. Stereotypes of another nature (laziness, sloppiness) are sometimes directed towards Arabs, though frequently business associates). According to certain Indians "the ideal Arab lives in speculation without working or making effort, rides in big limousines and employs fifteen servants at home".

- (7) A mildly derogatory term with colonial origins referring to all British civil servants of Indian origin.

In the first instance, Indians played the role of colonial assistants during the period of British occupation, a role which, according to the writer, they refuse to acknowledge today. This collaboration earned them privileged treatment compared to Africans (better salaries, better schools, and better treatment in terms of taxation)⁸. This partly explains the solidarity of Indians regarding the anti-colonial struggle waged against the British⁹.

Secondly, the commercial supremacy of Indians goes along with incessant abuse of dominant positions (exorbitant profits, excessive demands on African employees, insufficient salaries, usury etc). Already in the 19th century, adds the author, the Arabs of Zanzibar accused Indians of ruining their copal, gum and ivory trade, and denounced seizures of buildings when mortgage loans were not reimbursed. Generally, Indians show little attachment to Africans and to their adoptive countries. For a long time, they have been reluctant to become citizens of these countries. Many among them keep foreign passports in spite of numerous prohibitions expressed in the period after independence. They live away from Africans and their children do not attend the same schools. Very few of them engage in mixed marriages whereas, on their side, Africans have no inhibitions to this practice. With the exception of a minority, Indians have not been politically engaged since the period of independence or have only accepted to participate in order to defend their own interests¹⁰. Their philanthropy is self-serving and calculated, and only serves to mask their predatory behaviour¹¹.

Finally, Indians display customs foreign to the traditions of their adoptive countries in an ostentatious and provocative manner. There is for example the Diwali festival (Indian New Year) during which

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- (8) The author mentions higgledy-piggledy: very high daily food rations during the construction of the railway, expenditure on education seven to ten times higher in favour of Indians, proportionally lower poll tax, better political representation.
 - (9) Isolating this incident from its context, the author mentions the case of Alibhai M. Jeevanjee, an important Indian personality of that era, who brought up the idea of a unification of the Kenyan colony with the Indies Empire in 1910.
 - (10) "Kenyan Indians do not fully associate themselves with community life (national). Their principal occupations are business and administration. They are not prepared to (...) identify themselves with a country which has no other significance to them than that of being a place where they conduct their business" (M. Koinange, quoted by Nyaggah 1974: 221).
 - (11) A poll conducted in 1972 in Kenya indicates that a majority of Africans were ready to accept the presence of Indians once they accepted integration. In fact, while 76% of those polled favoured an expulsion of non-citizens, 80% thought that Indians with Kenyan citizenship had a right to live in the country (Rotchild 1973: 194, according to Prunier 1990: 244).

fireworks are let off every night, without considering the disturbance that may be caused to their African neighbours¹².

Like is the case of Indians towards Africans, the perceptions that the latter have of members of the diaspora changed after some years and even more during the recent period. Some prejudices have certainly disappeared and this evolution has left space for egalitarian relations based on contractual or friendly cooperation. However, the gap between the communities is far from over. Having not, without exception, lived in the same neighbourhoods, attended the same educational institutions, participated in the same games, having few common memories to share, Africans frequently perpetuate a fantasized ignorance of the representatives of the diaspora¹³.

Thanks to the extraordinary social ascension of the Indian community, the view developed by Africans is equally charged with negative stereotypes of a new kind, adding to those already existing in the collective imagination. Two clichés associated, not to the small shop owner (*dukawallah*) but to the company head or to the big financier, have taken course today in certain African circles, disregarding the fact that the flaws attached to them are not inherent to a particular group but are found just as much within the communities to which their accusers belong. The first, rather widespread among the working classes and farmers, is that of an exploitative and miserly employer, but also authoritarian and insensitive, cutting down salaries, contemptuous, or even racist towards the workers¹⁴. The second cliché, mainly held by opposition political parties, corresponds to the image of a financier who

(12) Celebrated in October or November according to the lunar calendar, Diwali marks the New Year in Northern India. A very popular festival of lights, it is accompanied by fireworks, firecrackers, etc.

(13) There is no recent poll on this subject. In the beginning of the 1960s, a poll conducted on 129 1st year students of Makerere University in Kampala and the University of Nairobi gave the following results: interrogated about their sentiments regarding Indians of the Diaspora, 52% of the respondents only mentioned negative traits, 45% considered Indians to be exploiting the Africans ; 27% affirmed that they were deceitful and dishonest ; 32% noted that they were spurred on by clan consciousness, 19% said that they suffered from a superiority complex, only 10% percent acknowledged their qualities :business competence and the positive role in the country's development (poll conducted by Pierre Van Den Berghe in 1962, quoted by Warah 1998: 37-38).

(14) Among the many African-Indian enterprises, some could definitely be the subject of complaints from their personnel: poor salaries, disregard for working hours and leave schedules, absence of medical cover and social security, deplorable working and hygiene conditions, etc. It is not certain, on the other hand, that the proportion of Indian firms to which this criticism could be levelled surpasses that of firms under African proprietorship. On the contrary, certain African Indian enterprises could comparatively act as models in political science and environmental concerns. This is particularly the case with several Ismaili firms such as Alltex, Farmer's Choice or Frigoken.

gets political connections through lobbying. They are thus considered corrupters, tax evaders, and money launderers¹⁵. Below is a summary of a selection of articles published in the Kenyan press giving an account of these different points of view, notably on the occasion of some events marking the history of Indian Kenyans: the anti-Indian riots of 1982 and their impact up to 1985; the campaign waged from 1996 to 1998 by Kenneth Matiba, chairman of FORD-Asili, an opposition party to the dominant party in power.

The African-Indian relationship according to the Kenyan press from 1978-1999

1978

- Indian business owners in Embu¹⁶ are accused of discriminatory attitudes towards Africans, preferring to use their vacant premises as warehouses rather than rent them out to Africans (*Standard*, 21 October 1978).

1979

- The DC (District Commissioner) of Kakamega¹⁷ criticizes Indians of having kept away from the Kenyatta day celebrations. He warned them of severe actions in future (*Standard*, 23 October 1979).
- The *Standard* announces that 25 000 Indians are holders of British passports (*Standard*, 19 September 1979).

1980

- Philip Leakey, assistant minister for Environment¹⁸ appeals to non-African Kenyans to participate more in *harambee*¹⁹ projects. He denounces the fact that Indians preferred to dedicate their money to motor racing rallies and sporting circles. He finally criticizes Indians for their propensity to promote donations of an advertising nature (*Standard*, 26th September 1980).

(15) Principal fraud denounced by African critics, yet commonly practiced by African businessmen themselves: getting money out of the country illegally by overcharging for equipment or other imported products and articles.

(16) A town in Central Kenya.

(17) Commissioner of Kakamega district in Western Kenya.

(18) A Kenyan politician of British origin belonging to an old colonial era family.

(19) A classical way of appealing for collective solidarity in Eastern Africa, it was also a watchword for the new extra ethnic citizenry during the era of Jomo Kenyatta's presidency.

1981

- The Minister for tourism criticizes Indians for not accomplishing their responsibilities as citizens, ignoring KANU²⁰ meetings, and charging high rents in order to eliminate African traders (*Standard*, 23rd February 1981).
- The Minister for transport declares that a bill will be presented which will compel foreign companies to distribute 51% of their shares to the public. He accuses Indians of tax evasion, taking away capital, and wastage of fuel in motor racing rallies (*Standard*, 8th April 1981).
- KANU accuses Indians of underpaying Africans (at the rate of 10 to 12 shillings a day) and treating them as slaves. It also condemns the employment of Indian immigrants without work permits (*Daily Nation*, 28th December 1981).

1982

- President Moi accuses Indian businessmen of sabotage. He condemns their illicit investment of money abroad. (*Daily Nation*, 23rd February 1982) Two months later, nevertheless, the minister for livestock urged Kenyans not to take Indians as their scapegoats. (*Daily Nation*, 8th April 1982)
- The Kenyan police pursue and arrest rioters who, on 1st August 1982, had looted and vandalized Indian shops and had raped several women, (the Kenyan press of 2nd August 1982).
- The *Daily Nation*, newspaper controlled by the Aga Khan, does an approximate toll of the riots of 1st August 1982: hundreds of Indian businesses and dozens of African businesses were destroyed, several women raped. Several Indians injured but none killed, 159 Africans rioters killed by the police. (*Daily Nation*, 7th September 1982)

1983

- In rebellion against the conservatism of his community, the young Shailesh Adalja (26 years old), a rich Indian businessman and playboy, pleads in favour of Indian integration, but with respect for cultural differences (*Kenya Times*, 2nd February 1983).

(20) Political party in power at that time.

- President Moi strongly criticizes Indians (notably the Ithnasheri) of engaging in the illicit export of capital to the United Kingdom, India, Pakistan and Iran (*Standard*, 23rd February 1983).
- The Kenyan journalist Philip Ochieng publicly condemns widespread prejudice among Africans against Indians (*Daily Nation* 10th April 1983).
- The *Standard* newspaper denounces the practice by property agents to display “*Strictly for Indians only*” (*Standard*, 12th April 1983). There were numerous reactions in all the daily newspapers.
- President Moi condemns xenophobic acts against Indians, particularly in Kisumu (*Sunday Standard*, 8th May 1983).
- According to the African opinion, the *Kenya Times* affirms that Indians are essentially “rich, miserly, secretive, arrogant, contemptuous towards Africans and, all in all, *insular*.” They settled in Kenya with the exclusive aim of making money. Once the fortune is made, they will leave the country. Thus Indians do not deposit their money in the Kenyan banks in order to easily transfer it abroad (*Kenya Times*, 15th August 1983).
- A delegation of Kenyan Indian communities is received by president Moi to show their loyalty to the country. (*Daily Nation* 15th August 1983) On his part, president Moi warned the Indians against the illegal transfer of money abroad. He is pleased that 900 Indian Kenyans became life members of KANU (*Standard*, 15th August 1983). He urges Indians to put an end to non-declared importations of textiles and accuses some of them for not respecting the laws of the country. He criticized the Indian tourism agencies which carry out, according to him, an anti-patriotic propaganda among foreign visitors (*Kenya Times*, 16th August 1983).
- The young Shailesh Adalja publicly declares that Indians have to give up endogamy and that Indian companies should distribute 25% of their capital to Africans. He denounced the tax evasion practiced, according to him, by a good number of Kenyan Indians (*Kenya Times*, 21st December 1983).

1984

- The Minister in charge of water resources development urges Indians to participate more in the development of the country. (*Standard* 25th June 1984)

- President Moi accepts to participate in the Diwali festivities and assures that he will be on watch to prevent any discrimination towards every category of citizens (*Standard* 26th October 1984).
- On the occasion of Diwali, Shailesh Adalja concludes his campaign exhorting the Kenyan Indians to get more integrated into the nation (*Kenya Times*, 8th November 1984).

1985

- Mr Alijah Ename, vice-president of the *Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry*, accuses Indian industrialists and businessmen of having hindered Africans' economic prosperity. He observes that Indian businessmen buy their merchandise directly from manufacturers (themselves Indians) while Africans go through wholesalers, which reduces their profits. Mr Ename laments that after 21 years of independence, the country's economy is still dominated by foreigners. He denounced the fact that numerous banks controlled by Indians do not give credit facilities to Africans while certain industries with monopoly (batteries, tyres etc.) manufacture products of poor quality (*Standard*, 5th March 1985).
- Shailesh Adalja, in an article devoted to African Indian marriages, emphasizes that the 2500 year-old caste system cannot be eliminated in one day (*Kenya Times* 18th June 1985). He publishes a manifesto to promote mixed African Indian marriages, the end of residential segregation, the opening up of Indian companies to allow African shareholders, welcoming Africans in Indian clubs, etc. This manifesto is signed by a dozen of personalities although there was no Indian or Indian African (*Kenya Times* 6th October 1985)²¹.
- Refusing to comply with instructions from the Kenyan minister for National Education, the principal (of English nationality) of an English school comprising of 66% Kenyan Indian students expels four Indian students who had missed classes during the Diwali festival (*Standard* 19th November 1985)²².

(21) Disappointed by the results of his political campaign, Shailesh Adalja did not go beyond his suggestion and left Kenya in 1986.

(22) The minister had asked administrators of educational institutions not to punish absence because of religious festivals.

1986

- Mr Mohamed Yusuf Hadj, Coast Province commissioner, congratulates the Shia Bohras, for their participation in the development of the country (*Standard* 27th February 1986).

1990

- The *Daily Nation* newspaper publishes an inquest on Indian communities in Kenya. Among the reasons as to why Indians are not integrated into the Kenyan society today, the newspaper mentions the colonial policy of segregation. Fundamentally conservative, Indians wish to preserve their culture. But, contrary to the thoughts of many Africans, they are not racist; they are 'caste-based' and "community" based (*Daily Nation*, 14th November 1990).

1992

- In an inquiry dedicated to Kenyan Indians, the *Daily Standard* affirms that relations between Indians and Africans are a combination of class and interethnic relation because a majority of rich Kenyans are of Indian origin. It denounces, once more, the fact that Indian real estate agents exclude Africans who want to settle in the Indian residential quarters (*Standard*, 12th March 1992).

1993

- In August 1993, six Indians are assaulted and murdered in Nairobi. *The Standard* does not regard this act as villainous crimes. (*Standard*, 7th September 1993)

1994

- Signed by Mau Mau Posterity, Anti-Indian pamphlets accusing Indians of racism and threatening of reprisals circulates in Nairobi (*Standard*, 29th September 1994).

1995

- The *East African Standard* announces the creation of an association to defend Indian interests: the Eastern Action Club of Africa (*East African Standard*, 26th December 1995).

1996

- At the national congress of his party, Kenneth Matiba, chairman of FORD-Asili (a party opposed to KANU and president Moi), launches a war against Indians and White Settlers (British farmers settled in Kenya). He declares that the estates of white settlers and Indians have to be confiscated and that these should better prepare to leave the country. He accuses higgledy piggledy Indians of exploiting Africans, of engaging in dubious dealings, “of wallowing in wealth while Africans are dying of hunger”, of being arrogant, of being the principal cause of traffic jams in the city-centre of Nairobi, parking their vehicles anywhere for the simple pleasure of engaging in idle gossip. Kenneth Matiba believes that Kenya is a sanctuary for Indians after they were expelled from Uganda by Amin Dada. He adds that: “A majority of them are thieves and are corrupt” (*Kenya Times*, 12th March 1996).
- Kenneth Matiba, the chairman of FORD-Asili declares that Indians and White Kenyans should leave the country to avoid an inevitable expulsion” (*Kenya Times*, 21st March 1996)
- Kenneth Matiba announces that his party will soon produce a document justifying his previous statements regarding Indians. He renewed his criticisms towards Indians and levelled a list of accusations: 1) refusal to acquire Kenyan citizenship; 2) segregation in schools; 3) stranglehold on urban property leading to a high excess in property prices; 4) tax evasion, especially in the trade of fabric; 5) interested collusion with KANU party officials (*Standard*, 25th March 1996)
- The *Sunday Standard* condemns the statements made by Kenneth Matiba. They are a reminder of economic disaster that was in Uganda in 1972 through the expulsion of Indians by Dictator Idi Amin Dada (*Sunday Standard*, 10th April 1996)
- The *Daily Nation* strongly denounces the racist and hypocritical behaviour of Kenneth Matiba, who had been known for his relations with some Indian personalities involved in various scandals. According to the *Daily Nation* the success of Indians is based on two words “hard work and frugality”. After comparing Kenneth Matiba to Hitler, the newspaper recalled the role played by Indians in the country’s independence (*Daily Nation*, 28th April 1996)

- Most of Kenyan politicians condemn Kenneth Matiba's xenophobic statements, a candidate for the country's Presidency (*Daily nation*, 20th May 1996).
- The Ford Asili chairman attacks Indians again and accuses them afresh of corruption. He equally criticizes them for dominating the country's economy at the expense of Africans (*Standard*, 19th July 1996).

1997

- During the electoral tour in the Western region of the country, Kenneth Matiba reopens his anti-Indian diatribes. Saying that Indians keep Africans in slavery, urging the Luo²³ to put pressure on them to hasten their departure from the country, declaring that this departure from the country was part of his manifesto for the candidacy for president of the Republic (*Kenya Times*, 6th April 1997).
- Kenneth Matiba urges Kenyans to mobilize themselves to achieve the expulsion of all Indians from Kenya. This declaration is relayed by several FORD Asili officials (especially in Mombasa) denouncing illegal immigration, accusing Indians of monopolizing employment at the expense of Africans and of robbing the country, accusing them of corrupting politicians, etc. The remarks of Kenneth Matiba led to an outcry in the diplomatic corps circles in Nairobi and are denounced by KANU officials (*East African Standard*, 10th April 1997).

1998

- In a 14-page document, Kenneth Matiba relentlessly renews his hostile statements about Indian communities, pointing out several personalities in industry and finance implicated, in his opinion, in diverse embezzlements. Far from having the country's interest at heart, these people, he declares, only act in their own interest. Their "exploitativeness" has to be brought to an end. He criticizes the collusion between dishonest Indians and the current government. He commits himself that if he gets to power, he would revoke naturalizations obtained through illegal means and encourage the promotion of African company directors (*Kenya Times*, 18th August 1998).

(23) An ethnic group from Western Kenya.

1999

- In a survey on Indian communities in Kenya, *The People* newspaper revisits the tense relations between Indians and Africans. Far from improving, this relationship today has a tendency, according to the newspaper to deteriorate. The newspaper mentions three factors of this degradation: 1) The indiscretion of certain Indians that was recently revealed, indicating that they would carry several billions of shillings; 2) The reinforced belief among a majority of Africans that Indians control the major part of the Kenyan industry; 3) The recent influx of illegal immigrants from India. The newspaper nevertheless stands up for Indians who have been the subject of ridiculous depictions and who are frequently victims of prejudice by Africans (*The People*, 6th December 1999).

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Portraits and Fragments of Life Histories in Kenya¹

Michel ADAM

As a conclusion to this volume, the 19 following narratives or biographical fragments embody, at the level of the individual or the family, the recent history of populations of Indian origin living in Kenya. We could as well have collected these histories among populations residing in Uganda or Tanzania, these countries sharing commonalities with Kenya when it comes to African Indian settlements. We do not contend that the life histories briefly sketched out here can represent all the Indo-African communities of East Africa. Yet, they both illustrate their similar characteristics (geographical origin, language and culture in the broad sense of the term, belonging to the same condition of immigrants, frequent contemporary scattering of family in the world) and underline differences: different periods of settlement on the African continent, religious belonging, statutory origin, level of education, professional engagement, standard of living and social position, etc. Although one of the main obstacles to the integration of African Indians in their new host countries resulted from difficulties of communication with Africans, the following life histories reveal the truth of simple people, far from the prejudice too often attached to generalizing representations. If they highlight existing sociocultural determining forces, they also bear witness to the variety of individual trajectories often marked out by day-

(1) Except for the last 4 portraits of known personalities, names appear in initials and surnames were changed.

to-day hardship, thus belying simplistic social caricatures about Indo-African still pervasive all around East Africa.

Portrait of Farooq R., Sunni Punjabi, owner of a car rental company in Nairobi²

In Nairobi, Farooq A. is the owner of a car rental company that is well known by tourist agencies, embassies and European residents for the quality of its vehicles. His vehicles are generally second hand but well maintained and offered at lower rates than those of big companies. Farooq is from a Sunni Muslim family and was born in 1924 or perhaps in 1928, not far from the city of Jeelander that is part of Punjab, now located in Pakistan. Farooq arrived in Kenya with his mother when he was 10 years old. This was shortly after his father had settled in Nairobi as a stonecutter for stones meant for construction of mosques. Two years later, his father abandoned the family and moved to Kisumu³ in the company of another woman. Farooq's mother returned to India with her second son. Since he had been left alone, the young Farooq joined his father in Kisumu. Once in Kisumu, Farooq was employed in a flourmill to clean machines. The work was however hard and dangerous. Rebuffed by his father, Farooq was placed in a dairy factory as a mechanic apprentice. At the age of 16, his boss assigned him to drive a GMC truck even though he did not have a driving licence. Being too small to reach the pedals, he rammed the truck into a ditch. Having been forgiven by his boss, Farooq doubled up as a mechanic and driver. He saved little by little, sometimes by taking passengers illegally on his truck during milk deliveries. He was thus able to amass 28,000 shillings, a considerable amount of money at that time. Upon reaching the age of 20 years, the in-laws of his sister who was married in India proposed one of their daughters (his brother-in-law's sister) to him for marriage. Contrary to customs, the bride did not bring dowry, a condition Farooq was willing to accept. When the marriage took place, the bride and the groom had never met. On the wedding night, Farooq discovered with desolation that his wife was toothless. In the years that followed, Farooq never stopped saving part of their income in order to buy her dentures. Farooq says that after a difficult start with his wife, he finally got attached to her. She is currently disabled and stays at home, totally dependent to her husband who spends several hours a day with her. Shortly after his

(2) Interview carried out in Nairobi in 2001.

(3) Town located on the shores of Lake Victoria, at the extreme end of Western Kenya.

marriage, Farooq quit his job as a driver and accepted an offer in Kisii⁴ town where he was employed as a mechanic in the County Council Administrative garage. He remained there for seventeen years to perfect his training as a mechanic. He went back to Nairobi around 1966. He was then about 38 years old. He opened a small garage in the industrial area, taking advantage of small abandoned premises belonging to his brother in law. Two years later, he became the owner of the premises and came up with the idea of hiring out used and old model vehicles that were in good condition at a cheap price. The success was immediate. Encouraged by the satisfaction of his customers and his reputation for honesty, Farooq now owns about twelve tourist and off-road vehicles. At the location of the previous small premises stands a concrete building of three floors. Farooq is a father of a daughter and two sons. The daughter has been married for several years. She is a university graduate, though she does not exercise her profession. The eldest son, known as Abdul, is his father's associate and he did his training on the job. Abdul is also a father of two sons and a daughter and his eldest son is learning how to run the company. Farooq's youngest son lives in Malindi⁵. Another son, formerly a pilot (the third in the series), died some years ago in an accident.

The father and the son share one office decorated with a shiny Cadillac grille that was taken from a 1960s limousine. They live together in the Indian area of South B (a modest residential area). Farooq and Abdul co-own two farms in the Kamba⁶ region in which they employ at least fifteen African workers. They practice modern farming of mangoes (600 trees irrigated by a drip-drop system). Although that activity generates profit, Farooq sees this occupation as a hobby, "for love of nature," he says. Farooq also has more substantial income in addition to that of his business: he owns eleven rented houses in two Indian areas of Nairobi (South B and Westlands).

Farooq has a gay and cheerful character and is a practicing Muslim. He is active in religious organizations, regularly pays tithe, gives alms (especially to Maasai elders who regularly visit him) and professes the principles of honesty and strict family morality. He visited India once, but did not enjoy his stay, having lost contact with his family. His children have no plans to settle abroad and he fully considers himself a Kenyan citizen.

(4) Another town found in Western Kenya not far from Kisumu.

(5) Town located at the coast of Kenya, North of Mombasa.

(6) Region located at approximately 150 km South-East Nairobi.

Portrait of Sultan D., an Ismaili manufacturer in Nairobi⁷

Sultan D. is almost 50 years old and belongs to the Ismaili community. He is originally from Homa Bay on the shores of Lake Victoria, where his father ran a wholesale grocery. In 1990, using the family resources, and taking advantage of credit offered by Ismaili financial institutions, Sultan established a paper factory that recycles newspapers and old papers in Nairobi.

Sultan's factory is situated in a muddy and offset industrial area. The company purchases old papers from local wholesalers (buyers of scrap press or spoilt packaging material) as well as from street boys in Nairobi⁸ several times per week. It employs hundreds of people and uses machines purchased in India. All members of the executive staff (ten people) are Indians. With the exception of an engineer, they belong to the owner's family in one way or another (brother, brother in law, cousin, and uncles) and many were recruited from India. The engineer is of Hindu faith and originally from Delhi. He was recommended to Sultan by the director of his insurance company. Other managers (purchasing manager, deputy finance director, engineers, etc.) come from Gujarat or Maharashtra. The financial director is Sultan's maternal uncle and is from Vasai, a town near Mumbai⁹. As a bank clerk in Bombay, he used to spend four hours a day to get to work by train in the past. He is now very happy to be in Kenya. All managerial staff (the family and the Hindu engineer) meets every day in a big and well-lit dining room for lunch. Meals are strictly Indian vegetarian and are prepared by African staff.

Sultan lost his father shortly before he left Homa Bay. Although she is not by any means the heiress to her husband's property, Sultan's mother seems to play the role of real executor of the will. Always dressed like women of her native region (*sari* and the traditional head veil), she occupies an office in the central part of the company and gives orders to the staff. In fact, she seems to decide everything.

Sultan is married with two children. He is an intellectual (a part from English, Gujarat, Hindi and Swahili, he also learned Sanskrit). He lives with his family in Ngara area of Nairobi. This area was formerly occupied by Indians but is now gradually being occupied by Africans. His children are enrolled in an Ismaili school in Nairobi.

(7) Interview carried out in 2001 in Nairobi.

(8) "Street children" live mostly on selective sorting of garbage.

(9) Vasai or Bassein (formerly Bajipur) historic town, an old Portuguese trade post.

Portrait of Chabir H., orthodox Shia Bohra, restaurant owner in Mombasa¹⁰

Born in Mombasa about fifty years ago in a Shia Bohra merchant family, Chabir H. lived in his hometown until his late teens. After failing biology studies at Egerton University in Nakuru¹¹, he obtained a certificate in professional accounting from Nairobi. Trying his luck in the United Kingdom (Glasgow) and assisted by his parents, he started studying tourism and thereafter he studied computer science in which he acquired a diploma. He was a company employee but he used to dedicate his free time to archaeology. Through this, he ended up being recruited by an international group of Bohra researchers. As such, he made eighteen trips to the Middle East (Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Jordan). Tired of Europe and clerical work, he returned to Kenya in 1980 with his savings and bought the restaurant that is found at the entry of the old town. Founded in 1868 and having maintained its oriental décor of Indo-Arab style, this modest establishment whose interior is somehow faded, does not lack charm despite its dusty surroundings. Being away from the street noise and near the central market, the restaurant prepares simple meals for local customers who are usually in a hurry (vegetable curries, samosas). Chabir also sells Indian pastries, cookies and candies flavoured with cardamom in large transparent plastic bins that keep away the many flies found in the neighbourhood.

Chabir lives modestly and respects Bohra traditions. He has a beard, wears an Islamic cap and during holidays, he wears the local *kanzu* (loose white tunic with embroidered notch, usually worn by Swahili men). Old photo portraits of community saints and verses from the Koran are hung on the walls of his restaurant. Chabir H. has a daughter who is already married and three sons whom he has enrolled in an Ismaili school. The eldest of them, aged 21, has just opened an Indian frozen food company called *Royal Ready Meals* in Mombasa. He got the idea while visiting a supermarket in England.

In order to implement his plan, the son spoke to local representatives of the Bohra community. Having written and submitted a brief of 50 pages (supported by technical information found on the Internet), he obtained a grant of 2 million Kenya shillings (€20 000), of which 500,000 (€ 5,000) was given as a donation. According to Bohra customs, a five-year loan does not generate any interest. The son will have

(10) Interview carried out in Mombasa in 2008.

(11) Town in central Kenya.

nothing to repay for the first year. But he must, as it is also customary among the Bohras, present a gift to the lender if the loan was profitable. With borrowed money, the son rented premises and bought a packing machine for €5 000 from India. The equipment also includes a kitchen, a big freezer and appropriate shelving. The company has a total of seven employees, all Africans, but familiar with working with Indians (cook, kitchen helpers, mechanic, accountant, etc.). The company delivers various frozen traditional Indian cuisine: *samosas*, *biriani*, *tandoori*, varied *curries*, rice, *raita*, etc. to local supermarkets on a daily basis.

Chabir H. gladly welcomes children coming to buy his cookies for five shillings. He earns his living the hard way, but he faces the future with optimism and maintains cordial relations with his numerous neighbours: Indians, Arabs and the Swahilis. He regrets the transformation of the neighbourhood. According to him, this phenomenon is due to the recent arrival of Somali immigrants. Like most Bohras, Chabir is not thinking of leaving Kenya in the future and expects it will be the same for his children.

Portrait of Murtaza A., reformed Shia Bohra, antique dealer in Mombasa¹²

The great grandfather of Murtaza A. arrived in Mombasa in 1860 by dhow where he settled as a furniture merchant. The shop was originally situated on the ground floor of an old Arab house near Fort Jesus but was later moved to its current location, near the city centre. It is at that time (1960) that the nature of his business changed. Murtaza's father turned to buying and selling of antiques. Having studied electronics, Murtaza was engaged for 24 years as an employee in a radio repair workshop belonging to a Hindu Punjabi. At the age of 55, he took over his father's shop after his death ten years ago. Business did very well. Murtaza sold to Europeans living in Kenya, or to hotels, especially at the coast. As it is usually the case with many antique shops in Kenya, objects on sale are an imbroglio in which are found at least four cultural universes of reference: Colonial England (furniture, dishes, ornaments, most of them dating from early last century), Arab-Swahili crafts (consoles and carved wooden panels, models of dhows, etc.) cheap Indian cultural products (tapestries, polychrome decoration and grimacing figurines representing various deities); heterogeneous remnants from the West. Murtaza also has a large collection of clocks dating from mid nineteenth century. These clocks were from North America and were originally

(12) Interview conducted in Mombasa in 2006.

intended for the Russian market. They were however turned down by their buyers. They thus passed through the hands of German and British merchants and later became the property of Arab and Indian families in Zanzibar after a consolidated shipment to the colonies. Murtaza's father took over these assets after these Arab and Indian families had been expelled from the island in 1964.

Murtaza has two children, a boy and a girl, aged 16 and 18. Both are studying in Kenya (they are enrolled in Jain Oshwal high school in Mombasa). None of them has expressed the desire to pursue their studies abroad.

As far as the situation of Indians in Kenya is concerned, Murtaza has appeasing remarks. In spite of irregular and uncertain income, he says he is personally satisfied with his situation. As a Kenyan citizen, he has no plans for the future anywhere other than in his country. Having travelled in Europe and Japan (but not in India where he has no ties), he enjoys living conditions in Kenya (climate, cost of living, housing, domestic services, social life). He recognizes that urban insecurity is a problem, but he has to put up with it.

Murtaza runs the business with his family. He never borrows from the bank, but sometimes borrows from his elder brother, or even from the small reformed Bohra community of Mombasa. He is not against association with Africans, but believes he can only trust a tiny minority. He fears partners who do not respect their commitments. He says Arabs can be acceptable partners, and often loyal. However, Bohras rarely borrow outside their community because they do not take interest-bearing loans. This does not however prevent them from doing good business.

Murtaza talks about the municipal policy whose orientation he blames and also criticizes some members of the diaspora. In Mombasa, the largest pieces of land and buildings are owned by Indians, the rest being owned by Arabs. However, the share of Arabs is gradually increasing and many Indians have difficulty in collecting rents from the Somali clients who have become the majority in some neighbourhoods. Real estate speculation is high. Beautiful buildings constructed during the colonial era, like the Minor Hotel or the Bank of India (near Fort Jesus) were destroyed (the latter building was destroyed several years ago). The plot where Minor Hotel used to be located was bought by an Indian speculator. However, construction on this plot was not permitted due to the presence of old underground holes that were dug in the

hotel foundation¹³. The place is currently a vast field of garbage, unfit for habitation right in the heart of the city centre. As for the Bank of India plot (belonging to a Hindu), it was used to build one of the most unsightly modern buildings in Mombasa, completely disfiguring the site of Fort Jesus and the view of the Old Town¹⁴. Other speculators are Arabs, like the owner of the latest skyscraper in Mombasa who made his fortune in coffee trade.

Like in the rest of Kenya, Indians in Mombasa are grouped according to residential areas. According to Murtaza, this situation worsened recently because Indians were once very present in the old town, now mostly inhabited by Arabs and increasingly Somalis. Although the Hindu presence is high because of the proximity of several temples (especially the big Shiva temple), all Indians who remained here for residential purposes are Muslims. The situation is the same for Nkrumah road area, the main artery linking the city centre to old town. However, in Digo Road area (main street linking the city centre to Likoni Ferry), all traders are Hindus (mostly Patels and Lohanas) and none of them has left the neighbourhood.

Murtaza lives a somewhat reclusive life, punctuated with occasional visits from customers and neighbours. From his shop, located near various places of worship (Anglican Church, Hindu temple and mosques), he hears several times a day manifestations of the country's religious diversity that are particularly sensitive in Mombasa: the muezzin's call for prayers, the ringing of bells and the chanting of Hindu devotees. At sunset, these contrasting testimonies of popular piety form a kind of concert from which harmony is less an euphonious character than the message of tolerance they bear. Murtaza appreciates the peaceful coexistence of all faiths. He has no particular plans for the future, unless the revenue derived from his business fail him. He plans, in that case, to get back his former job as an electronics engineer.

Premchand K., Jain Navnat, importer and wholesaler in Mombasa¹⁵
K. Premchand was born in 1930 in a small town in Gujarat (India) in a Jain Navnat middle class family; his father was a secondary¹⁶ school teacher. At the age of 24, Premchand arrived in East Africa in 1954 to settle for a marriage that had been arranged by his two brothers who had

(13) According to rumour reports dating from the end of 19th century, these underground holes were used to clandestinely transport slaves after it was abolished by the British.

(14) This building is to currently the new head office of the Bank of India.

(15) Interview conducted in 2008 in Mombasa.

(16) About Navnat Jains, see the chapter on socio-religious communities.

already settled in Panga, Tanzania. At the beginning, he was employed in an import-export company in Mombasa. He saved some money to open a small shop in 1959 in collaboration with one of his two brothers. When this brother passed on in 1963, their business had grown. With the help of his nephew (son of the deceased brother), Premchand opened a small import and export company.

Premchand is currently a father of three sons. He has succeeded in leading a family-owned company of about 160 people that has several branches and activities (Mombasa, Dar es Salaam, Kampala, Nairobi, Kisumu). Based in Mombasa, and still run by its founder (79 years), the parent company is specialized in trading of various items that look heterogeneous, but actually well selected based on the local market, resale value in the region and prices offered by producers. The main imported goods are office supplies, crockery, bicycle spare parts, wires, reams of paper, hessian and medical equipment, all from China, Hong Kong, Indonesia and India, and sold to local retailers. In order to get appropriate information, Premchand explored the regional market targeting supply gaps and resale prices among retailers. Before selecting his suppliers, he went to trade fairs attended by foreign exporters in Mombasa, Dar es Salaam and Nairobi. Premchand also buys wholesale goods to resell them in neighbouring East African countries: Tanzania and Uganda, where his branches are located. Edible oil, soap, detergents and cosmetics produced in Kenya are among the main items in his catalogue. They are stored in one of the stores at head office in Mombasa, and then they are shipped to Uganda or Tanzania, or delivered directly to local customers. All customers are Indian African shopkeepers, usually approached through door-to-door canvassing. Premchand sells on credit for 60 days, as it is common practice in the profession.

Located in the city's industrial area, the company employs 25 people in Mombasa, including 18 Africans and 7 Indians. Out of the 7 Indian employees, the three managers are family members (the father, the third son, the grand-son). All Africans are junior staff except two employees and the chief accountant, a Kamba lady trained by the boss, having been recruited from domestic staff formerly employed by the family¹⁷. Among Indian employees, two are Jains, the father's distant relatives, and two Badala Sunni Muslims who are in charge of store management¹⁸.

(17) Kambas are a Bantu ethnic group in Kenya settled in the area between Nairobi and Indian Ocean coast.

(18) Sunni Badala are Sunni Muslims from Kutch (Gujarat) and belonging to the *badala* caste (*jati*). They are sailors, a social status that is not well appreciated. See the chapter about

Led by the youngest son, the Dar es Salaam branch is co-owned by the family K. (46%), another Oshwal family friend (40%), and an African partner of Chaga origin whose religion is Catholic (14%)¹⁹. The shareholders enjoy excellent relations among themselves. The company employs approximately 100 people: 90 Africans and 10 Indians. 4 of these Indians (“rockets”) arrived recently from India and belong to other communities (Hindu Dhobis). In 2002, the youngest son even opened a candy factory in Dar es Salaam. Its prosperity is now assured.

Premchand recently inaugurated a syringe factory (he was already a syringe importer) in Mombasa. He came up with the idea after finding out that all of syringes used in Kenya were imported from India. Having learned the processes after an internship in a factory in Bombay, the third son of the family brought the machinery from India and Korea. After an advertisement on Internet, a consultant was recruited from India. He quickly moved to Mombasa for two months and was hosted by the family to set up the factory after the land was purchased and buildings constructed. The new factory employs about thirty people, including five Indians who recently arrived from India (“rockets”) and form the supervisory staff (head of production, head of purchasing, laboratory director, technicians).

The three sons – among them the eldest son, who died in 2001 – were all involved in the management of family businesses, though the father retains ultimate control over all decisions. The husband of one of the daughters is also a business agent and a supplier of his father-in-law. He owns a shop in town and provides some of the export supplies. He also sells a small portion of catalogue items. The eldest of the seven grandchildren is 22 years old. He is a graduate of a British business school and already has a role to play in the company. The second grandson (20 years) is preparing to take a role in the company upon completing his studies in USA.

Premchand K. is optimistic about the future of Indians in Kenya. He considers Kenya as his country and he has never thought that his descendants and successors can leave it. After his sons got married two decades ago, he began looking for a fiancé for his eldest granddaughter. He hopes to make the right choice... “with the consent of the latter”, he says.

socio-religious communities.

(19) Chaggas are a Bantu ethnic group living in the North East of Tanzania, near the Kenyan border (Mount Kilimanjaro region).

Portrait of Mohamed J., Ithnasheri Shia, a shipping broker in Mombasa²⁰
 Mohammed J. is an Ithnasheri Shia Muslim. He comes from a family that originated from the Bombay region but settled in East Africa since the mid-nineteenth century. He is the living testimony of the so frequent scattering of large families of the Indian diaspora. One of the first immigrant's sons settled in Zanzibar, the second in Lamu (Kenya), the third in Mombasa, and the last in Madagascar (Tuléar). Mohamed J. is about 60 years old and is the heir to an import and export company in Mombasa, mainly engaged in cereal trade. He settled in 1976 as a shipping broker and he currently represents twenty companies in Mombasa. Mohamed's eldest son is a lawyer in Nairobi. The second son is employed in New York in a Swiss-American optical company. His third son is a shipping broker in Toronto. Mohamed's daughter is married in the U.S. to a medical doctor. Mohamed wants to spend all his life in Kenya, but does not hope to make his children come back. He made several short stays in India, but lost all contacts with his family. However, he maintains old traditions at home and imposes the use of Gujarati language in the family. Besides English, Swahili and Gujarati, he also speaks Urdu, Persian and Arabic.

Portrait of Hassan V., an Ithnasheri Shia, a farmer in Mombasa²¹
 Born around 1945 in Arusha, Tanzania, Hassan V. belongs to a family of Ithnasheri Shia Muslims from Gujarat that migrated to Zanzibar three generations ago and later settled in northern Tanzania. Like other Indian families, Hassan's family has moved a lot during the last century, leaving Arusha in 1964 for Uganda where Hassan's father operated a lumber company at the time. Then Hassan came to Kenya after another brief stay in Tanzania. He purchased 5000 acres of land²² near Voi. Currently, he is mainly cultivating sisal, oranges and watermelons sold in the local market. The sisal fibre is exported to Spain and South Korea. Among all his brothers and sisters, Hassan is the only one who remained in Africa, others having migrated to Great Britain and Canada. Hassan lives in Mombasa with his wife and frequently travels to Voi. His son finished studying marine biology in England and wants to move to Kenya to do research on corals. His daughter is married in Canada and wants to stay there. Hassan has lost contacts with India and, unlike most Ithnasheri, he is not in close contact with his religious community. But he has many

(20) Interview conducted in 2001 in Mombasa.

(21) Interview conducted in 2001 in Mombasa.

(22) Approximately 2,000 hectares. Voi town is located not far from Mombasa, in the interior.

friends among Hindus. He is a member of the Mombasa Sports Club, an old colonial institution currently frequented by 70% of Hindus.

Portrait of Issa K., a Cutchi Kumbhar Sunni Muslim and printer in Mombasa²³

Issa K. is about fifty years old and belongs, within the larger Sunni Muslim community, to a small group of modest social status known as Cutchi Kumbhar (former blacksmiths)²⁴. He has a small printing house near the port of Mombasa. Issa was born into a family of fairly recent immigrants; his father left India in early 1930s. He is married with two daughters and a son. Both daughters are married, both to members of the Kumbhar community. One lives in Britain while the second one is based in Mombasa. The son works in the family business which is also associated with that of Issa's brother. Issa's wife does not work. Issa lives very modestly on the ground floor of a dilapidated house. One of the rooms in the house serves as his workshop. Issa has one employee and deals with neighbouring businessmen, Indians and Africans (business cards, posters and billboards, various adverts, etc.).

Issa's family members visit representatives of other Sunni Cutchi groups as well as Cutchi Patel Hindus whose language is identical to theirs. They have very few or no ties at all with other Indian Africans whatever their religion. Within the Sunni Cutchi community in Mombasa, Issa may be seen as relatively privileged. Most of them being employees of other Indian Africans, members of this regional group generally have insufficient income to enrol their children in Indian schools and must therefore contend with public schools. Even though this situation facilitates their eventual integration into the great mass of Africans, it also leads to embittered attitudes which mask great dissatisfaction. While reducing their chances of social advancement, it deprives members of this group of resources (including language) to try their luck abroad. Being generally without resources to obtain passports and air tickets, and having no knowledge or relationship with the West, they also have no chance to consider a stay there.

(23) Interview conducted in 2002 in Mombasa.

(24) Making fun of their poor social status in the traditional hierarchy, the Kumbhar cheerily say that they are graduates of, or decorated with "PMDL" (Pottery Makers and Donkey Leaders), a parodic mockery of initials that usually appear on important people's business cards as per the British tradition, mentioning their university qualifications and other decorations (PhD, or MC: Military Cross, VC: Victoria Cross, KBE: Knight of the British Empire, etc.).

Portrait of Yusuf S., Punjabi Sunni Muslim, butcher in Nairobi²⁵

From the Sunni Punjabi Muslim community and approximately thirty years old, Yusuf S. runs a small butchery in Pangani area in Nairobi. Yusuf is the great grandson of an immigrant who arrived in Kenya in 1893, shortly before the start of construction of the railway. He comes from a family of butchers, though one can practice another profession if deemed necessary. Thus, Yusuf's grandfather took part in the construction of the Ismaili mosque in Nairobi when he was unemployed. All Indian butchers in Pangani area are also related (uncles, nieces or nephews).

Yusuf's customers include African and Indian Muslims, but also other non-Muslim people in the neighbourhood: Kikuyu, Kamba and Luo. Like all Indian butchers, Yusuf only sells sheep meat because beef is a taboo to Indians, whatever their religious affiliation. Pangani is a former middle-class neighbourhood but is being impoverished day by day. It was once exclusively inhabited by Indians: Sunni Cutchi (Memon Luhar), Punjabi Sunni, Sikhs and Ismailis. It is now full of Africans and Indians have become a minority. However, apart from aggravation of criminality (according to residents, this is due to the proximity of Eastleigh, inhabited by many Somali immigrants), relations between communities are peaceful and friendly.

Married and a father of three young children, Yusuf lives modestly and does not frequent other neighbourhoods. He has never gone to India and does not consider doing so.

Portrait of T. S. Singh, Ramgarhia Sikh, public works contractor in N.²⁶

Born in 1943 in Punjab, T. Singh is a building contractor in N. He is divorced from an Anglo-Canadian woman and he has no children. He lives alone, keeping as much as possible, close ties with his siblings and 14 nieces and nephews, though most of them have settled abroad (India, U.S. and Canada). Born in a family of eight children (three boys and five girls), T. Singh arrived in Kenya at the age of two years. T. Singh's father, a retired military officer from the British army, established the present company in 1948. After high school in Nairobi, T. Singh took over the family business in 1978, together with his two brothers. He currently manages it alone because his brothers left the country (one in the U.S., and the other one in Great Britain). Employing about one hundred workers, this family business has become the main one in the region as far as categories are concerned. In N. likewise, other building companies

(25) Interview conducted in Nairobi in 2001.

(26) Interview conducted in 2001 in N., a small town in Central Kenya.

are in the hands of Indians or Africans, but most of them are small scale. In T. Singh's company, senior staff members (three engineers and the chief accountant) are Indian. The rest of the employees are African.

T. Singh lives well: he has a nice house and a big off-road vehicle. He has excellent relations with his neighbours. The town of N. has sixteen Sikhs families and about one hundred Indian families. T. Singh visits a large number of them regardless of their caste. He also visits representatives of the African bourgeoisie (mainly government officials), especially at local golf grounds that is held in high esteem by all members of the Indian diaspora. His relations with Africans of the same social level are trusting and cordial, yet episodic. In addition to Swahili, T. Singh speaks Kikuyu (language of the region).

T. Singh is from the Ramgarhia group (Sikhs of lower status than the Zamindar). This group is subdivided into several socio-professional subgroups that were once hierarchical (carpenters, masons, blacksmiths, etc.). Without evidence of a particular religious zeal, T. Singh is consistent with traditions of his group. He attends religious ceremonies and wears the traditional turban. He travels extensively in the country (his company has projects in other regions) and goes to Nairobi where he periodically visits acquaintances and friends. He travelled once to India (in 1961 at age of 18 years), but he does not intend to go back there because he has few relatives.

Portrait of Mullah H., orthodox Shia Bohra, businessman in N. with interests in hardware, locks, glassware and sanitary equipment²⁷

Mullah is approximately fifty years old. He has a large shop specializing in hardware, locks, tools, glasses, sanitary equipment and households in the centre of N. town. Born in Mombasa, he is from an old Indian African family that arrived in Malindi²⁸ in the first half of the nineteenth century. Mullah's father had the oldest bookshop in Mombasa while his paternal uncle established one of the first glassware shops in Nairobi in which Mullah made his debut as a salesman. Encouraged by his family, and having taken a loan from community institutions, Mullah opened his current shop in N. in 1978.

Mullah's shop is a kind of a dark junk shop whose corners are filled with a multitude of seemingly different items. However, selection of these items is based on a paradigmatic logic that is characteristic of businesses found in remote areas and responding well to the linking

(27) Interview conducted in 2001 in N., small town in Central Kenya.

(28) Town in the Coast province of Kenya, North of Mombasa.

needs of specific essentials of the consumer. Thus, dealing in taps and bathroom tiles, customers also have a choice of a secondary chain of non-durable goods used in the bathroom: soaps, toothpastes, shaving creams, shampoos, etc. Like in all Indian shops, all the items for sale are exposed to the buyer's eye, and this brings out the impression of apparent confusion.

Although staff (African) receive customers without excessive affability, business is doing well. Mullah maintains very good relations with businessmen in the neighbourhood, mostly of Indian origin. He says that he hosts several African friends at home and that in his absence, he entrusts them with the keys of his house. He regularly travels to Dubai and India to see his suppliers (about once a year). Though he has no family in India, he likes to stay a few days in the land of his ancestors. He visited the family graves and makes pilgrimage to Bohra holy places.

Mullah says he is a Kenyan like any other and has no intention of leaving his country. He is the father of one daughter who recently got married. She is a teacher in another town in Kenya. He intends to give his shop to his son-in law.

Portrait of Karim C., Punjabi Sunni Muslim, antiques and African handicraft dealer in Nairobi²⁹

Karim is about sixty years old. He is the son of a Punjabi Sunni Muslim who was a serviceman by profession and was additionally employed as a tailor in the supplies service. The adventurous story of Karim's father is that of a man enlisted in the colonial army in India at a time when the British Empire still reigned over half of the world. Having done his military service in the Far East shortly before World War II (Burma, China, Singapore), he was imprisoned by the Japanese, then escaped and rejoined the British service. He was posted to Egypt, from where he participated in the Italian campaign and was present during the Allied Forces' victory in Germany. He went back to the garrison in Egypt and after the war, he was involved in several military operations: Palestine, Eritrea, Somaliland. In 1949, he became a demobilized soldier in Kenya and called his family that had remained in India (he got married in 1937, but had not seen his wife since then). Using his little savings, he opened a food shop in Nairobi that was sold in 1969, after the measures imposed by Jomo Kenyatta against non-Kenyan traders.

Being the eldest in a family of eight children, Karim helped his father to re-establish a small carpet business by borrowing from his

(29) Interview conducted in Nairobi in 2002.

community. Located in a busy neighbourhood frequented by Europeans, the business flourished. In 1978, Karim took it over, enlarged and expanded its catalogue to African handicrafts meant for tourists. This was the beginning of a real business success that continues today.

Karim has not moved away from his residence in Ngara, an estate once inhabited by the majority of Indians belonging to his community. He visits African Muslims and Arabs of different nationalities. Through them, he became a consul in a country in the Middle East. Several of his brothers and sisters have succeeded in their professional life: one of his brothers is a successful businessman; another one is a lawyer while the sister is employed at the United Nations. Part of his family is scattered around the world: the last of his sisters and two brothers settled in London, an uncle in Dublin, a second one in Singapore and the last one in Cairo.

Portrait of Zarina K., orthodox Shia Bohra, a secondary school teacher in Mombasa³⁰

Zarina K. is in her fifties and she is a teacher in a private secondary school in Mombasa. She is from the Bohra community and strictly adheres to her community's dressing code: long skirt, fitted bodice and a veil around her face. She was born in Ambanja (Madagascar) and lived there until her marriage in 1980. Arranged by the parents of both spouses, the marriage hurriedly took place due to the presence of the Bohras' Dai (Imam) in Mombasa, who was visiting the region. Having never met before, both spouses got to know each other on their wedding night. Zarina never saw her father again because he died that year.

Zarina's husband is an electronic technician and works in a certain company in town. Zarina is satisfied with her marriage that gave him three daughters, the first being married to a Bohra of Madagascar Indian origin who is a dentist based in Montpellier. The second daughter is studying medicine in Poland and is about to be engaged to a Kenyan Bohra who is known to her mother. As for the third daughter, she is a student in computer science. She recently experienced an unfortunate engagement, having belatedly discovered that her suitor was alcoholic. Zarina has good relations with Africans. She is much more suspicious of Arabs, and even more of Somalis whose recent mass arrival disrupts, in her words, community balance in Mombasa.

An active woman, enterprising and determined, she is the founder and principal of the secondary school where she teaches. She has her

(30) Interview conducted in 2008 in Mombasa.

own income, probably higher than her husband's. She strongly defends the Dai's work and that of the Bohra community institutions, despite being conservative in nature.

Portrait of Benazir C., Memon Sunni Muslim, foodstuff shopkeeper (*dukawallah*) in N.³¹

Benazir C. is 38 years old and married with two children. She manages a foodstuff and various household items shop. Her husband is employed in one of the capital's several security companies. Therefore, he lives in Nairobi (during weekdays) and only sees his wife in N. during weekends. Aged 14 and 13 years, her two children are boarders in African private secondary schools. The eldest of the children is in Nairobi while the younger one is in K, another town in Central Kenya.

Originally from Mombasa, where her family jointly runs a small transport company, Benazir came to N. in 1983 to get married (she was 18 years old at that time). She took responsibility of running the shop almost alone, but with the help of one African employee who was in charge of serving customers. During his visits to N., her husband orders for supplies and checks the accounts. Luckily located at the corner of two streets, the shop is the classic description of a *dukawallah*: behind a glass counter (which is also filled with goods) all items relevant to a daily non-demanding African customer's life are piled on shelves, plus some minor goods for equipment or more festive consumption. Benazir does not practice micro-retail (selling in units or small quantities like in the countryside) and just like neighbouring traders, her prices are 10-20% higher than those of large supermarkets in the capital. Most customers simply do episodic and limited shopping (totalling an average of 100 to 200 shillings, or € 1-2). Benazir does not sell on credit. Since she is alone, Benazir has a closed character towards her clients and rarely smiles.

The income from the shop, combined with her husband's, is sufficient for household needs and probably for small family savings. But they do not have luxury. Main costs incurred are children's education and transport. The couple has an old car that the wife drives while moving around town. The husband uses public transport (*matatus*) to commute to and from the capital.

Benazir dresses like Punjabi women, where her family distantly comes from: coloured *sari* and white head veil (*dupatta*). Neither she nor her husband knows India where they have no relatives at all. Benazir spends all her days in her shop, from nine in the morning to five o'clock in the

(31) Interview conducted in 2001 in N., a small town in Central Kenya.

evening giving herself little leisure. In the absence of her husband, she occupies part of her parents' in law house, sharing it with her widowed mother-in-law and the family of one of her brothers-in-law who is also a businessman in N. Benazir and her husband are happy in Kenya. The whole family has no plans of migrating. On the other hand, they rarely visit Africans. When the husband is in N., the couple's free time is spent watching videos or visiting Indian friends.

Portrait of Shahshi S., Oshwal Jain, a secondary school teacher in Nairobi³²

Shahshi S. is almost thirty years old. She was born in Madagascar, in a family of seven children (six girls and one boy) belonging to the Jain religion and of Gujarati origin. After five years of university education in Mauritius, she was married in 1999 by her parents to a fabric dealer from her religious community and residing in Nairobi. Four of his sisters were married through family arrangements. Two of them now live in Kenya, but in different towns. The eldest sister, fifty years old, lives in India (in Gujarat); her marriage was arranged by her paternal grandfather when she was only nine years.

Shahshi S. did her secondary education in a French secondary school in Madagascar. She has not been influenced by the teachings of Jain religion and, without denying her community ties, she has a soft heart for secular principles that she discovered during her schooling. Most of her friends were not Indian-born, but rather Malagasy and Chinese. Nevertheless, Shahshi's family always expressed the desire to preserve and transmit the original Indian culture (especially Gujarati language). Shahshi learned Hindi very early in life by listening to tapes and disks or by watching Indian films at home. However, she was acquainted with English language at school and in Mauritius.

The family of Shahshi's husband is from a village of farmers in Gujarat. The first immigrant from the family of Shahshi's husband arrived in Kenya in 1920. He was the son of a railway workman who returned to India in 1902 after the completion of railway construction. Shahshi's parents-in-law are about fifty years old and go to their ancestor's homeland every two years, sometimes accompanied by their son and their daughter-in-law. Their stay in Gujarat is short because the original family has abandoned the countryside and now lives quite poorly in an apartment in the Bombay suburbs. Dedicated to family reunions, shopping of different types as well as touristic and religious visits (like

(32) Interview conducted in Nairobi in 2002.

the pilgrimage to Palitana Jain Temple), the trip is not very interesting due to the cold welcome (loosening of family ties and limited financial resources).

Shahshi is very attached to her financial independence and freedom of movement and always dresses European style. Together with her husband, they occupy a three-bedroom apartment in the Indian area of Parklands, away from her husband's workplace (city centre) and from her in-laws' home. The couple has no children. Shahshi has little opportunity to mix with Africans, she often sees Europeans at her workplace. The situation is different for her husband who mixes with African clients in his shop on a daily basis, totally cut off from the European social universe. The couple's leisure life is purely Indian style. Accompanied by her husband, Shahshi enjoys evenings in town: having dinner in a restaurant (Indian), drinks, ice cream and betel quids in *Little Bombay* (Diamond Plaza), watching movies (Indian) at Sarit Centre³³, etc.

Portrait of Chandni S. Oshwal Jain, a secondary school teacher³⁴

Chandni S. is about forty years old and lives alone in Nairobi with his widowed mother and a sister, also widowed and childless. Chandni's paternal grandfather, Praful S., arrived in Kenya in early 1920, his parents having died of a plague in India during the First World War. Employed as a porter in his elder uncle's shop based in Nairobi, Praful had no other bedroom for several months other than the cool and starry night in the highlands of Kenya, sleeping on the dirty sidewalk in front of the shop entrance. Taken as a partner by another younger uncle, Praful soon proved his talent as a trader. After he returned from India where he married, he managed to save enough in a few years to open a small foodstuff and soft drinks shop. As the business continued to flourish, he seized the opportunity to visit a relative in Nyanza (Kisumu region, at the extreme end of Western Kenya) where he bought a sugar cane plantation. A few years later, he expanded his activities in Tanzania, opening in Dar es Salaam another retail business, whose management was entrusted to one of his nephews.

Being the sole heir to the paternal property, Chandni's father was raised in Kirinyaga area in the family house belonging to his father's uncles. In fact, his father never left this house³⁵. Rich and appreciated,

(33) Diamond Plaza and Sarit Centre are two business centres in Nairobi visited by members of the Indian diaspora.

(34) Interview conducted in Nairobi in 2002.

(35) Old Asian area in Nairobi, now mostly inhabited by Muslims.

he was elected to an honorary post in Oshwal community before he suddenly became bankrupt following a setback. He became an insurance agent and managed to give a good education to his seven children (five girls, two boys, all graduates of European universities). The first son now owns a service station, the second runs a large early fruits and vegetables Export Company. Three girls are teachers, one is an executive secretary, and the last one is a graphic artist. As it is often the case in the Jain intellectual circles, Chandni's family commonly marries outside the community. One of his sons married a Hindu while a daughter is married to a Swede. In the following generation, mixed marriages are even more common; only two nephews married girls from India (a Jain Oshwal and a Hindu Lohana). One of the nephews is married to a French woman and a second one to a German, a third to an Englishwoman, a fourth to a Malaysian. A more distant cousin married a Zairian.

While the Chandni brothers have settled independently, she did not leave the paternal house where her mother still lives with one of his elder sisters. Old and venerable, the family house is surrounded by small extensions (laundry, kitchen) with a courtyard where African servants work. The mother and two sisters take their meals in a large dining room, crowded with black furniture and decorated with family portraits and old photographs dating from the colonial era. Meals are prepared and served by the sisters. Although vegetarian in principle and habit, they exceptionally eat chicken, excluding all other meats, especially beef.

Portrait of Naushad Merali, Shia Ithnasheri, industrialist and chairman of Sameer Investments Ltd³⁶.

Born in 1951 in a modest Shia Ithnasheri family, Naushad Merali began his career as chief accountant in a car company in Nairobi (Ryce Motors). After he became the chief manager of the company, Naushad Merali later bought it. From 1985, he succeeded in quickly buying several subsidiaries of American companies that were having difficulties due to economic downturn: Firestone (tyres), Carbide Union, now Everyday Batteries (Battery), First National Bank of Chicago (now First National Bank and whose management is entrusted to Horacious Da Gama Rose, a Goan friend and business associate), Prudential Insurance (now First Insurance Company). Considered one of the richest men in Eastern Africa, Naushad Merali is now head of a real industrial and financial empire: tires, dealership in car accessories and supplies (Sameer Africa, Ryce Motors, Everyday Batteries), telecommunications (40% stake

(36) Information published in Kenyan and international media.

in KenCell, second mobile provider in East Africa). In partnership with various African investors (including Moi and Kenyatta families), Naushad Merali also has interests in public works (H. Young), tourism (Ark), real estate as well as importation and exportation (Sameer Industrial Park). In recent years he has added production and marketing of coffee and tea (Tea and Coffee Sasin) to its range of activities.

Portrait of Manu Chandaria, Jain, industrialist³⁷

Premchand Manujal Chandaria, popularly known as Manu, was born in Mombasa in 1929 in a family of Jain traders that arrived in Kenya in 1916. Manu's father was the proprietor of a foodstuff shop in Nairobi (Biashara Street) and after a few years of saving, he acquired Kalu Works Company, a small factory of aluminium items. This was the premise of the family fortune. After studying science in India (Bombay University), the young Manu won a scholarship to the University of Oklahoma (USA) where he graduated in 1951 with an engineering degree. First employed in Kenya in Kalu Works Company, he contributed to the rapid development of the company. He settled in Uganda in 1958 where he established a branch of Kalu Works that eventually became autonomous in 1961. Manu returned to Kenya at independence. By that time, he was already regarded as one of East Africa's leading employers. For this reason, Manu Chandaria was close to President Jomo Kenyatta and Daniel arap Moi, who was then the vice-president of Kenya.

Manu Chandaria owns about a hundred companies in Africa and Europe operating in several industrial branches (Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi, Nigeria, Zambia, Mauritius, and France). He currently heads several companies dealing in metallurgical production (steel and aluminium) and has substantial interests in banking and insurance. A former chairman of the Kenya Association of Manufacturers and other corporate organizations in East Africa (East African Business Council, British Business Association, etc.), Manu Chandaria is at the head of Chandaria Foundation, a charity founded by his father in 1952, and several other charities.

Portrait of Alibhai M. Jeevanjee (1856-1939), journalist and businessman, Shia Bohra³⁸ entrepreneur

Born in 1856 in a poor Shia Bohra family in western Gujarat (Cutch), Alibhai Jeevanjee based in Karachi set up a small import and export

(37) Information published in Kenya and international media.

(38) Salvadori 1989: 9, 175; Patel 1997: passim.

business under the protection of a wealthy businessman. Initially specializing in trade with Australia, he then turned to East Africa. In 1890, he signed the first contract with the Imperial British East Africa Company (IBEAC) for the recruitment of contract workers, including candidates to serve as police officers in the Kenya colony. In 1891, Alibhai Jeevanjee established a branch of his company in Mombasa. In 1895, he was again approached by the IBEAC to supply labour and materials for the construction of future railway from Mombasa to Lake Victoria. He brought the first group of 350 workers recruited in Punjab from Karachi (Salvadori: 9).

After settling in Kenya, Jeevanjee engaged in construction activities. He built the Bohra mosque known as Burhan on the seafront in Mombasa. When the railway reached Nairobi in 1899, Jeevanjee became the developer of the first residential buildings. When British authorities set fire to the bazaar to end an epidemic disease, Jeevanjee bought the land from 1906 to build stores. Most of them were resold to Jain traders (Salvadori: 175). After he became the City Council supplier, he laid out the first public garden in the city (now called Jeevanjee Gardens) near the shopping area.

Alibhai Jeevanjee played publicist and politician roles. In 1901, he established *The Mombasa African Standard* in Mombasa, the first newspaper in the history of Kenya. It became the *Mombasa Times* and later the *East African Standard* two years later and was published in Nairobi. Simultaneously, he was engaged in the protection of Indian interests in Kenya. As the chairman of Mombasa Indian Association in 1906, he was the first Indian to sit in the Kenya Legislative Council in 1910 and the only Indian to be accepted into the posh Nairobi Club, a colonial club he had built. On the occasion of two visits to London in 1906 and 1910, he defended the rights of the Indian minority, even suggesting that the colony be fully attached as a sub-royalty of India – a position for which he was criticized by the African nationalists.

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Glossary and Inventory of Main Places¹

<i>Ahmadiyya</i> :	schismatic Muslim sect from north west of <i>India</i>
<i>Ahmedabad</i> :	capital of the Indian State of Gujarat
<i>Ajlaf</i> (<i>a, u</i>):	social category corresponding to “common people” among Muslims of the Indian sub continent (see Ashraf and Arzal)
<i>Ajlaf</i> (<i>a, u</i>):	social category corresponding to “common people” among Muslims of the Indian sub continent (see Ashraf and Arzal)
<i>Amba Devi</i> (<i>s</i>):	god mother
<i>Amba</i> (<i>s</i>):	mother
<i>Ambika</i> (<i>s</i>):	the “Mother”
<i>Amil</i> (<i>a</i>):	Dai’s religious representative <i>in</i> anjuman
<i>Amin</i> (<i>a</i>):	Dai’s civil representative
<i>Anjuman</i> (<i>h</i>):	religious province among the Bohra
<i>Anuloma</i> (<i>h</i>):	type of asymmetrical marriage between a male Ego and a spouse of inferior status
<i>Arati</i> (<i>s</i>):	sacred song

(1) This glossary brings together proper nouns, toponyms and lexical terms from different languages used by members of the Indian diaspora in East Africa: mainly hindi (*h*), gujarati (*g*), urdu (*u*) and sanscrit (*s*), including arabic (*a*), persian (*p*) and swahili (*sw*).

<i>Arya Samaj (h):</i>	Hinduism's reformed movement
<i>Arzal (a, u):</i>	inferior statutory group, equivalent to that of "Untouchables" among Muslims of the Indian sub continent.
<i>Ashraf (a, u):</i>	social category corresponding to the "nobility" among Muslims of the Indian sub continent (see Ajlaf and Arzal)
<i>Atman (s):</i>	soul
<i>Baba (h):</i>	name given to holy people, especially the Sikh ascets
<i>Badhala or Badala (g):</i>	sailors caste living on the coast of the Kathiawar peninsula (Kachch)
<i>Bahen (h, g):</i>	sister
<i>Bahu (h, g):</i>	daughter in law
<i>Balutchi:</i>	inhabitant of Balutchistan, a former province of North Western India, currently part of Pakistan; the Balutchi of East Africa form a caste of former soldiers whose religion is Sunni Muslim; Balutchi also refers to the language spoken in the region
<i>Banyan:</i>	trader, Anglo-Indian term coined from Gujarati banya or vaniya and used in reference to Hindu and especially Jain traders
<i>Banya ou Baniya (g):</i>	trader
<i>Bapuji (h):</i>	patriarch, a very respected father
<i>Bapu (h, g):</i>	father
<i>Baroda or Vadodara:</i>	important town situated in the east of Gujarat state
<i>Batin (a):</i>	among the Nizarite Ismailia and the Bohra, it is an esoteric and comprehensive reading of founding texts of Islam. See zahir.
<i>Bhagavan (s):</i>	"blessed"
<i>Bhajan (s):</i>	litany

<i>Bhakti</i> (s):	devotion that allows one to establish close relations with divinity
<i>Bhatia</i> (g):	sub caste of traders from Sindh and Kutch (sea traders)
<i>Bhatt</i> (s):	caste of bards and astrologists among the Brahma
<i>Bhavan</i> (s):	Brahman divinity
<i>Bhavnagar</i> :	small region situated in the east of the Kathiawar peninsula, in the Indian state of Gujarat.
<i>Bhay</i> (h, g):	brothers in the model of a joint family (kutumba)
<i>Bha</i> (h, g):	mother
<i>Bhoi</i> (g):	transporters' caste
<i>Bihar</i> :	north eastern state of India
<i>Bindi</i> (s):	coloured spot on the face
<i>Brahman</i> or <i>Brahmin</i> (s):	member of the highest order (varna), in charge of religious functions
<i>Brahma</i> (s):	Hinduism's highest divinity
<i>Çadaqa</i> (a):	voluntary alms among the Ismaili (also see Zakat)
<i>Chakra</i> (s):	in Hindu religion, it is a time wheel driven by Krishna's flute
<i>Choti jat</i> (h):	lower castes belonging to Sudra
<i>Cutchi</i> or <i>Kutchi</i> :	inhabitant of Cutch or Kutch, a province on the western part of Gujarat which borders Sindh (current Pakistan); it is also the language spoken in the region (Gujarati dialect)
<i>Dai</i> (a):	imam's "delegate" among the Bohra
<i>Darji</i> or <i>Darzi</i> (g):	weavers and tailors caste
<i>Darkhana</i> (h):	administrative province placed under the authority of the Ismaili "government"
<i>Daskina</i> or <i>daskshina</i> (s):	Brahman's fees; offerings
<i>Dasond</i> (p):	tithe for the Ismaili

<i>Derani (g):</i>	last born brother's wife
<i>Deravasi:</i>	major movement among Jains, especially among the Oshwal
<i>Der (g):</i>	husband's last born brother
<i>Desh (h, g):</i>	country
<i>Deva, devi(s):</i>	god or goddess in general
<i>Dev (s):</i>	secondary divinity, good animal spirit
<i>Dharma (s):</i>	in Hindu religion, it is law or order; a fair action in respect of law
<i>Dharma Smriti (s):</i>	collection of traditions regulating life in society
<i>Dhobi (g):</i>	dry cleaners caste
<i>Dhoti (h):</i>	peplos without a seam
<i>Dilwara:</i>	site of mount Abu (Rajasthan) known for its famous Jain temples
<i>Diwali, contracted form of Dipa Wali (h):</i>	celebration of light; New Year among Hindus, very popular in East Africa
<i>Dukawallah:</i>	shopkeeper (composite word formed from a Swahili root and a Gujarati suffix)
<i>Durga (s):</i>	Parvati's reincarnation, Vishnu's sister and Shiva's wife, nature and fertility's goddess, celebrated on the occasion of Navrati festival
<i>Dvija (s):</i>	"born twice"; qualifier used in reference to members of the first three varna (brahma, kshatriya, vaishya)
<i>Dwaraka or Dwarka:</i>	holy town on the west of Gujarat known for its Bhagavan Krishna Hindu temple
<i>Fundi (sw):</i>	artisan
<i>Gande (g):</i>	unclean
<i>Gandharva (s):</i>	passion marriage by fictitious kidnapping of the fiancée

<i>Ganesh (s):</i>	god of travellers and traders, symbol of wisdom, represented by an elephant head
<i>Ginan (u):</i>	Ismaili religious poem
<i>Gnati (g):</i>	caste in Gujarati language (see also jati)
<i>Gotra (s):</i>	patrisib (clan of paternal descent without territory ties) referring to an apical ancestor (generally a rsi: prophet veda)
<i>Gujarati:</i>	inhabitant of Gujarat, north western state of India. Also the language spoken in the region
<i>Gurdwara (u):</i>	Sikh temple
<i>Gurjar (g):</i>	carpenters caste
<i>Guru Nanak:</i>	founder of the Sikh religion
<i>Guru ou gourou (s):</i>	spiritual master
<i>Haqiq (g):</i>	happiness ring
<i>Hare or Hari (s):</i>	form of Vishnu or Krishna
<i>himsa (s):</i>	non-violence
<i>Hindi:</i>	lingua franca of the Indian union from a group of languages of northern India
<i>Holi (s):</i>	Hindu festival of fertility celebrated at the fall of spring (March)
<i>Hunda (h):</i>	dowry
<i>Hyderabad:</i>	1) capital of the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh, in the centre of Dekkan ; 2) important town in Sindh province, on the south-east of Pakistan
<i>Jaman (h, g):</i>	food
<i>Jamatkhana</i>	territorial assembly of the Ismaili within the darkhana (administrative provinces)
<i>Jama'a or jamaat (a):</i>	assembly of the faithful among Muslims
<i>Jamnagar:</i>	Gujarat town situated next to the Kutch golf

<i>Jati (s):</i>	caste (see also gnati)
<i>Jetani (g):</i>	elder brother's wife
<i>Jet (g):</i>	husband's elder brother
<i>Jgnan or jnan (s):</i>	spiritual knowledge
<i>Jotawa (h):</i>	child born from an Indo-African couple
<i>Jutha (s):</i>	food's ritual purity (not to be touched by others)
<i>Jyotisi (h):</i>	Brahman astrologer
<i>Kaira:</i>	town in the Indian state of Gujarat
<i>Kakkar (u):</i>	for the Sikhs, prescriptions that decorate the male body: Kesha (beard), Kangha (comb), Kara (aluminium bracelet), Kashha (boxer shorts), Kirpan (sword)
<i>Kakka (s):</i>	raw food (unclean); as opposed to cooked food (clean): Pakka
<i>Kala pani (s):</i>	"black water", name given to the ocean by hard-line Hindus
<i>Kala (s):</i>	black
<i>Kali (s):</i>	"the Black"
<i>Kalpa (s):</i>	reincarnation cycles in the Hindu religion
<i>Kamaria (u):</i>	among the Ismaili, assistant of the religious leader of the local community (mukhi)
<i>Kamiz (u):</i>	tunic
<i>Kankani or Konkani:</i>	vernacular language from south western India, spoken by Goan catholics
<i>Karan:</i>	(distortion of "Koran") name given to people of Indian origin in Madagascar
<i>Karma (s):</i>	important course (including different reincarnations) depending on the individuals' code of conduct in the Hindu religion
<i>Kashmiri:</i>	inhabitant of Kashmir state

<i>Kaskazi (sw):</i>	name given to the winter monsoon characterized by the formation of trade winds blowing from north east to south west (see Kuzi)
<i>Kathiawar:</i>	peninsula region situated on the south of the Indian state of Gujarat
<i>Kerala:</i>	south western state of India
<i>Khalsa:</i>	community of Sikhs
<i>Khamshi or khums (a):</i>	“fifth”; among the Bohra, tax deducted from enterprise profits
<i>Khandan or khandam (h):</i>	patrilineage (see Kutumb); also: family of a high rank in northern India
<i>Khoja: from Gujarati khwaja:</i>	“lord”; another name of Nizarite Ismaili and sometimes the Bohra
<i>Kokni or Kankoni:</i>	sailors caste of Sunni Muslim faith from Maharashtra
<i>Krishna (s):</i>	Hindu divinity, Vishnu’s eighth reincarnation
<i>Kshatryia (s):</i>	member of second order (varna); in charge of military and government functions
<i>Kuladevata (s):</i>	tutelary divinity <i>in the</i> prayers of Hindus
<i>Kumbhar (g):</i>	potters caste
<i>Kundali (s):</i>	personal horoscope established by certain pandits seers
<i>Kurta (u):</i>	long shirt
<i>Kutumba (h):</i>	joint extended family
<i>Kutumb (h):</i>	patrilineage (see Khandan)
<i>Kuzi (sw):</i>	name given to the summer monsoon characterized by the formation of winds known as “counter trade winds” blowing from the south west to the north east (see Kaskazi)
<i>Lakshmi or Laxmi (s):</i>	Vishnu’s companion and divinity of riches <i>and</i> beauty
<i>Leva Patel:</i>	socio regional group belonging to the Patel caste

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<i>Leva Patel:</i>	socio regional group belonging to the Patel caste

<i>Lisan ud dawat (a):</i>	liturgical language of the Bohra
<i>Lohana (h):</i>	vaishya caste that is widespread in northern India
<i>Lohar or Luhar (g):</i>	blacksmiths caste
<i>Lotha(s):</i>	bell shaped container meant for ritual ablutions
<i>Maharashtra:</i>	western state of India (capital: Bombay or Mumbai)
<i>Mahavir, Mahavira (s):</i>	“great hero”; nickname given to Vardhamana, founding hero of the Jains religion
<i>Mahila (s):</i>	female wing
<i>Mandal (s):</i>	association
<i>Mandir (s):</i>	temple
<i>Mangal sutra (s):</i>	necklace made of beads and golden pearls and golden glass offered by the husband to his spouse on the wedding day
<i>Mantra (s):</i>	sacred expressions of the Hindu prayer, many of them trace their origin in the syllabic radical om, but can form various syllabic chains. Constant repetition of the same mantra corresponds to a litany of recited psalms on the occasion of different Hindu prayers
<i>Manu (s):</i>	man; first man in the Hindu mythology
<i>Marathi:</i>	language spoken in the Indian state of Maharashtra
<i>Math (s):</i>	monastery
<i>Medrassa or medressa (a):</i>	Muslim religious school
<i>Memon:</i>	Sunni Muslim caste of traders in materials and fabrics of Sindh origin (currently Pakistan)
<i>Mitakshara (h):</i>	collective family appropriation mode specific to north west of India
<i>Mithaq (a):</i>	fidelity oath to Dai among the Bohra
<i>Moksa (s):</i>	self-accomplishment; liberation in nirvana

<i>Muci or Mochi (g):</i>	cobblers and leather artisans caste
<i>Muhabbat (s):</i>	marriage through sheer sexual attraction
<i>Muhindi</i> (pl. <i>Wahindi, sw</i>):	“Indian” in Swahili
<i>Mukhi (a):</i>	among the Ismaili, religious leader of the local community (jama’a)
<i>Mutlaq (a):</i>	“his holiness”; title of respect given to the <i>Dai</i> among the Bohra
<i>Namaskar:</i>	traditional greeting (literally: “honour to you”; meaning hello or goodbye)
<i>Namdhari:</i>	religious minority within the Ramgarhia (Sikhs)
<i>Nar (s):</i>	bad animal spirit
<i>Nath or jath (h, g):</i>	lineage segment in northern India
<i>Navnat (g):</i>	group of Jains from Jamnagar (region of Gujarat)
<i>Navratri or</i> <i>Navaratri (s):</i>	“nine days festival”; celebrated by Hindus in September and October in Durga’s honour
<i>Nayi or Nayee (g):</i>	barbers caste
<i>Nevroz:</i>	Ismaili New Year
<i>Nikah:</i>	marriage among the Bohra
<i>Nirvana (s):</i>	absorption of a being in cosmic ether, corresponding to the state of non-reincarnation.
<i>Niyoga (h):</i>	inheriting the brother’s widow
<i>Nizarite:</i>	disciple of Nizar; synonym of Ismaili agakhanist
<i>Noorani (a):</i>	“luminous”; respectful nickname given to the Aga Khan
<i>Ordeni (u):</i>	female veil
<i>Oshwal:</i>	group of Jains largely found in East Africa, whose distant origin is the town of Oshia (Rajasthan)
<i>Pajama (u):</i>	tunic and matching trousers; traditional dress of northern India

<i>Pakka (s):</i>	cooked food (clean); as opposed to raw food (unclean): Kakka
<i>Palitana:</i>	holy town of the Jains on the east of Bhavnagar (Gujarat), well known for the splendour of its temples
<i>Panchayat (s, h):</i>	corporation
<i>Pandit (s):</i>	title given to Brahma religious scholars
<i>Parvati:</i>	see Durga
<i>Patel:</i>	vaishya caste that is widespread in the north and north west of India
<i>Patidar:</i>	synonym of Patel
<i>Pir (p):</i>	<i>Ismaili</i> spiritual guide
<i>Porbandar:</i>	port town of Gujarat, Mahatma Gandhi's birthplace
<i>Prajapati (h):</i>	heavenly being; also autonym of Kumbhar, potters caste from Gujarat
<i>Prasad (s):</i>	food distributed during worship
<i>Pratuloma (s):</i>	form of asymmetrical marriage between a male Ego and a spouse from a superior status
<i>Pritibhoj (g):</i>	community festival
<i>Puja (or Pooja) ghar (s).</i>	altar or domestic temple
<i>Pujari (s):</i>	priest
<i>Puja (s):</i>	prayer, often accompanied by a sacrifice or ritual offering (rice, fruits, flowers, etc.), especially in front of domestic altars
<i>Punjabi:</i>	inhabitant of Punjab, north western state of India, currently split in two parts, one of them belonging to Pakistan. Also, language spoken by the inhabitants of the region
<i>Purana (s):</i>	collection of Sanskrit traditions

<i>Purdah (h) or dupatta:</i>	veil of a female head; also a protective curtain in the house
<i>Purohita (s):</i>	preacher, scholar
<i>Qaum (a):</i>	“tribe” in Arabic; term used sometimes by Muslims in reference to jati
<i>Rajasthan:</i>	north western state of India, bordering the current Pakistan
<i>Rajput:</i>	inhabitant of Rajasthan; in East Africa, member of varna belonging to the kshatriya
<i>Raj (s):</i>	literally: “king”; lord, aristocrat
<i>Rakhsha Bandha (or Bandhan):</i>	celebration of a brother-sister relation in the Hindu tradition
<i>Raksasa (s):</i>	form of marriage through abduction
<i>Ramayana (s):</i>	Brahma’s epic great poem from India
<i>Rama (s):</i>	solar divinity, Vishnu’s seventh reincarnation.
<i>Ramgarhia:</i>	commoners among the Sikhs
<i>Rangoli (h):</i>	tapestry
<i>Riba (a):</i>	interest loans
<i>Ridha or rida, also known as bui bui:</i>	Bohra women’s hood
<i>Roca (g):</i>	engagement (“arrest”)
<i>Saasu (g):</i>	mother in law
<i>Sabha (s):</i>	association
<i>Sadhu (s):</i>	ascetic person who lives on alms
<i>Safai chitthi:</i>	community identity card among the Bohra
<i>Sahib (s):</i>	master
<i>Sahj or Sahaja:</i>	one of Shiva’s names; among the Sikhs, divine grace
<i>Samaj (h):</i>	society

<i>Sanathana Dharma (s):</i>	“eternal perfection”; autonym in reference to orthodox Hinduism
<i>Sanathan (s):</i>	“eternal”
<i>Sangh (s):</i>	congregation
<i>Sannyasi (s):</i>	monk
<i>Sanstha (h):</i>	association
<i>Sapinda (h):</i>	direct lineage male ascendants and descendants in the Indian patrilineal model
<i>Sardar (p, u):</i>	respectable man among the Sikhs
<i>Sari (h):</i>	peplos worn by women from the Indian sub continent
<i>Sari (g):</i>	jewel that is inserted in women’s nose on the wedding day
<i>Sati (s):</i>	widows suicide, forbidden by British authorities in 1829
<i>Satpanh:</i>	path of salvation for the Ismaili
<i>Satsang (s):</i>	religious reunion or on the pretext of religion, which takes place in a private place or in one’s house
<i>Sayyed (a):</i>	statutory group of aristocratic rank among Indian and Pakistani muslims
<i>Shastri (s):</i>	preacher, officiant
<i>Shiva (s):</i>	god of fertility, one of the three main Hindu divinities, mainly venerated in Gujarat
<i>Shree or Shri (s):</i>	honourable, sir, madam
<i>Sindhi:</i>	inhabitant of Sindh, former Indian province, currently incorporated in Pakistan (south east); also, language close to Hindi spoken in the region and comprising elements from former Dravidian languages
<i>Sindhor (g):</i>	coloured spot on the lower part of the face
<i>Singh (s):</i>	from simha, “lion”, family name of many Sikhs and certain kshatriya

<i>Soni (g):</i>	goldsmith and jewellers caste
<i>Sthanakvasi:</i>	minority movement among the Jains, mainly among the Navnat
<i>Stree ou Stri (g):</i>	woman; by extension: "female"
<i>Sudra or Shudra (s):</i>	member of the fourth order (varna); in charge of services; excluded from the category of the "born twice" (dvija)
<i>Sulka (h):</i>	marriage compensation, bride <i>wealth</i>
<i>Sunar (u):</i>	goldsmiths caste among Muslims
<i>Surat:</i>	historic town of south eastern Gujarat, well known for its business port; also the Bohra religious capital
<i>Surya namaskar (s):</i>	in the Hindu prayers, song in praise of the sun, also meant to chase the demons which disturb the night. Celebrated in the morning and in the evening, at sunrise and sunset. The prayer done on this occasion (gayatri or "triple song") wipes mistakes out
<i>Surya (s):</i>	sun
<i>Sutar or suthar (g):</i>	carpenters caste
<i>Sva dharma (s):</i>	individual's mode of conduct, based on the particular caste
<i>Svetambara or Swetamber:</i>	religious movement among the Jains
<i>Swaminarayana:</i>	reformed Hindu movement
<i>Swastika(s):</i>	cross potent symbolising the time wheel
<i>Talika or Tariqah:</i>	among the Ismaili, esoteric reading (batin) of the shar'ia; comments given on the law by the Aga Khan; in reality, instructions given to disciples
<i>Tamil Nadu:</i>	south eastern state of India
<i>Tirthanker (s):</i>	spiritual guide among the Jains
<i>Upadheya:</i>	scribes caste among the Brahma

<i>Urdu:</i>	language, close to Hindi, spoken in north western India and in Pakistan
<i>Uttar Pradesh:</i>	northern state of India at the heart of the Indian Ganges plains
<i>Vaishya (s):</i>	member of the third (varna); in charge of production and business functions
<i>Valmik:</i>	inferior caste assimilated to “the Untouchables” among the Sikhs
<i>Vanik (g):</i>	regional group
<i>Vanza or Wanza Darji (g):</i>	tailors caste from Gujarat (see Darji)
<i>Varna (s):</i>	social orders or ranks (“colours”), which are subdivided in many castes (jati)
<i>Vastu or vastu puja (s):</i>	among the Hindus, consecration rite of a building before its erection or <i>occupation</i>
<i>Visa:</i>	figure 20; in reference to twenty small towns of Jain Oshwal origin on the south western border of Rajasthan
<i>Vishnu or Vichnu (s):</i>	second major divinity of the Brahma trinity
<i>Wahindi (sw):</i>	name referring to “Indians” in Swahili (sing. Muhindi)
<i>Yajna (s):</i>	sacrifice, usually done using ghee (melted butter)
<i>Yuvuk mandal (s):</i>	youth association
<i>Zakat ou zaka (a):</i>	legal alms among the Shia; see <i>ṣadaqa</i>
<i>Zamindar (p, h):</i>	aristocratic group within the Sikhs; generally “land owners”

Index¹

- Abbasids: 262
- Abidi (Syed): 331, 343, 353
- Aborigines: see Outcastes
- Achora (martyrdom of): 262
- Acquisition Act*: 363
- Adalja (Shailesh): 416, 417, 418
- Adam (Michel): 58, 63, 75, 86, 106, 133, 152, 160, 171, 177, 232, 238, 252, 257, 275, 286, 297, 306, 309, 314, 316, 320, 325, 375, 399, 404
- Adamali (Kunj): 5
- Adamali (Noor): 5
- Adamjih (Hakim): 275
- Adamson (Iain): 347, 353
- Aden: 17, 103
- Adivasi* (Aborigines): 34
- Advocates, lawyers: 52, 56, 74, 83, 86, 94, 103, 105, 269, 294, 366, 432, 438
- Afghanistan: 223, 225, 226, 232, 233
- African culture(s): 57, **410**, 411
- Africans: 24-27, 35, 38, 39, 45, 53, 57, 59, 61-63, 65, 66, 70-72, 87, 91, 102, 105, 115, 117, 124, 125, 155, 173, 196, 201, 205, 208, 209-210, 275, 277-279, 292-293, 294, 296, 301, 305, 310, 322, 323, 328, 329, 332-334, 343-346, 349, 350, 363, 365, 370, 371, 373, 375-378, 380, 382-386, 389, 390, 393, **395-403**, 409-421, 428, 431, 434-438, 440

(1) This Index refers to the body of the text and the footnotes on each page. Some proper nouns have been retained (including place names and all the names of the cited authors), as well as a selection of keywords and vernacular terms. The figures in bold indicates specific reference to the subject.

- Aga Khan or Agha Khan: 46-51, 59, 60, 61, 72, 92, 95-98, 101, 158, 221-258 (*passim*), 265, 267, 294, 334, 393, 394, 399-403, 416
- Aga Khan I: 226
- Aga Khan II: 226
- Aga Khan III: 226, 227, 228, 231, 232, 244, 247, 249, 254
- Aga Khan IV: see Aga Khan (Prince Karim)
- Aga Khan Award for Architecture: 97, 248, 258
- Aga Khan Case: 226
- Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN): 242-243, 254, 255, 256, 400
- Aga Khan Foundation: 72, 97, 98, 244, 245, 247, 248, 254, 256, 258, 292
- Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development (AKFED): 229, 249, 252, 253, 256
- Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC): 243, 248, 400
- Aga Khan (Joan): 244
- Aga Khan (Prince Karim): 229 and *passim* 229-258
- Aga Khan (Zahra): 233
- Agakhanists or Aghakhanists: see Ismailis
- Age (structure): 121, 123-125, 143-144, 146-147, 148-153, 157-161, 167, 170, 171, 184
- Agrarwal (Narendra): 50
- Agriculture: 21, 22, 25, 47, 48, 85, 88, 90, 117, 168, 175, 389, 412, 424, 431-432, 441
- Agro-export: 18, 47, 71, 101, 250, 343
- Agro-food (industry): 46, 47, 54, 55, 85, 89, 90, 97, 101, 250, 278, 279, 280, 304, 308, 311, 312, 317, 318, 332, 343
- Ahimsa* (non-violence): 87
- Ahluwalia (potters): 90
- Ahmadiyya: 102, 334, 347, 411
- Ahmed (Haroon): 26
- Ahmed Saddiq (Suleiman): 65
- Ahmedabad: 17, 99, 260
- Aid: 365
- Aiglemont: 233, 258
- Ajlaf*: 92
- AKDN: see Aga Khan Development Network
- AKFED: see Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development
- Al Tayyib: 98
- Alam (Abid): 45, 350

- Alamut: 224, 226
- Alcohol (consumption and trade): 39, 91, 104, **200**, 216, 262, 289, 369, 438
- Alepp: 248
- Ali Shah (Hasan): 226
- Allawala (Iqbal): 50
- Alms: 263
- Altars: see Temples
- Amba Devi (or Ambika): 81
- Amil*: 264, 266, 267
- Amin*: 266
- Amin Dada (Idi): 28, 92, 97, 102, 154, 164, 327, 330, 335, 337, 338, 341, 344, 420
- Aminzade (R.): 390, 404
- Andrieu (Dominique): 134, 138
- Anjuman* (congregation): 266
- Antananarivo: 400
- Apartheid, de facto segregation: 19, 23, 25, 34, 57-58, 244, 277, 304, 306, 323, 363, 378, 380, 382, 383, 399
- Arab Peninsula: 17, 18, 373
- Arabia: 224, 373
- Arabic (language): 16, 38, 58, 98, 221, 224, 226, 264, 272, 432
- Arabs: 16, 17, 18, 24, 27, 49, 110, 113, 115-118, 122, 123, 126, 127, 130, 131, 156, 157, 203, 210, 265, 361-363, 364, 374-376, 379, 380, 381, 384, 386, 387, 389, 393, 395, 397, 412, 413, 427-429, 438
- Architect(s): 52, 54-56, 86, 94, 103, 105, 248, 290, 294, 314
- Aristocracy (also see *Ashraf*, *Kshatriya*, Jat, Zamindar): 98, 235, 236, 237, 310
- Arora (R.): 50
- Arranged marriage: **206-208**, 212, 266, 285, 286, 315, **319-320**, 366, 424, 438, 440
- Artisan(s): 20, 24, 33, 43, 54, 83, 85, 93, 169, 174, 251, 277, 290, 292, 328, 362, 365, 366, 376, 381, 396
- Arts and artistic activities: **69-70**, 248
- Arusha: 73, 126, 127, 231, 367, 432, 433
- Arya Samaj: 17, 33, 43, 48, 56, 59, 80-82, **86-87**, 198, 201, 306, 307, 310-311, 320, 322, 326
- Arzal*: 92
- Ashraf*: 92
- Asian Association: 384, 386

- Asiimwe (Godfrey): 27, 30, 300, 333, 338, 343, 353
- Association Urafiki: 405
- Associations: 33, 69, 81, 82, 86, 294, 296, 305, 308, 318, 320-323, 324, 340, 347-348, 352, 379, 393, 395, 425
- Augustins (Georges): 205, 219
- Aurengzeb: 99, 260
- Australia: 31, 67, 73, 95, 323, 444
- Automobile (assembly, service, repairs, spare parts, accessories, hire): 46, 49, 54, 55, 90, 97, 101, 278, 279, 280, 282, 290, 291, 309, 311, 312, 313, 423-425, 442, 443
- Awuondo (Isaac): 50
- Aziz (Rotam): 65
- Badala or Bhadala (sailors): 64, 80, 93, 313, 431
- Bader (Z.): 376, 380, 381, 382, 404
- Bagamoyo: 328, 329, 399
- Baganda: 301, 350
- Bagashwa (M.S.D.): 388, 404
- Bakwata: 92
- Balandier (Georges): 372, 404
- Balutchi: 80, 94
- Balutchistan: 20
- Bamako: 400
- Bamunanika: 330
- Bancet (A.): 389, 391, 404
- Bangkok: 412
- Bangladesh: 34, 132, 169, 223, 232, 400
- Banishment (*baraat*): 270, 271, 272, 273
- Bank(s): 18, 25, 29, 47, 48-52, 56, 87, 88, 96, 97, 103, 117, 229, 252, 253, 269, 278, 294, 311, 318, 343, 369, 376, 388, 389, 417, 418, 420, 428, 443
- Banya: 39, 204
- Bar(s): see Restaurants
- Barbers: see Hairdressers
- Bargash (Seyyid): 362
- Baroda: 69
- Barot (Rohit): 335, 353
- Bathia: 44, 55, 56, 79, 86, 290, 365, 376, 393
- Batibo (H.): 388, 405
- Batin* (reading) or *batiniyya*: 95, 96, 223, 261, 262
- Bennett (N.R.): 11, 373, 374, 405

- Bharati (Agehananda): 11, 26, 75, 83, 106, 203, 204, 208, 219, 378, 405
- Bhardwaj (Prabha Prabhakar): 337, 353
- Bhatt (Gopinath): 50
- Bhoi (hauliers): 79, 86
- Bihar: 20
- Bir Singh (Ramindar): 50
- Birth (rate), fertility: 125, 141, 158
- Blacksmiths: 80, 86, 90, 93, 290, 291, 366, 433, 436
- Blanchy (Sophie): 18, 58, 75
- Blank (Jonah): 264, 265, 272, 275
- Bocquier (Philippe): 5
- Bohra: 17, 19, 40, 41, 46, 55, 56, 59, 61, 66, 74, 80, 82, 87, 94, 95, **98-101**, 198, 200, 204, 205, 208, 211, 218, **259-276**, 287, 290, 291, 300, 315, 323, 326, 347, 363, 364, 370, 393, 418, **426-427**, **436-437**, 438 and photos
- Bohra (reformed): 42, **100**, 198, 201, 262, 265, 267, 269, **272-274**, **427-430**, **444-445**
- Boivin (Michel): 227, 257, 228
- Bollywood: 199, 202, 212, 320, 363
- Bombay (Mumbai): 18, 22, 66, 79, 86, 88, 94, 99, 101, 102, 114, 226, 260, 267, 269, 272, 273, 376, 400, 425, 426, 431, 432, 440, 443
- Bonini (Nathalie): 394, 405
- Bookshop: 282
- Borana: 205
- Bosnia: 232
- Bouglé (Célestin): 43, 75, 82, 106
- Bourdieu (Pierre): 405
- Brahmins: 33, 34, 39, 43, 44, 46-48, 51, 54, 56, 63, 68, 79, 82, **82-84**, 85, 99, 100, 104, 195, 204, 207, 208, 211, 213-215, 290, 306, 309, 322, 326, 362, 365, 411
- Brett (E.A.): 333, 353
- British: 17, 19, 22, 23, 25, 26, 34, 45, 57, 67, 69, 72, 85, 97, 103, 104, 110, 112, 114, 115, 116, 118, 120, 125, 128, 155, 156, 196, 277, 304, 308, 327-328, 332, 336, 337, 340, 342, 361, 362, 375, 376, 379-385, 412, 413, 433, 435, 442
- British Guyana: 328
- Brown (Ruth): 336, 353
- Buchert (L.): 399, 405
- Buddhism: 87, 311, 364
- Buganda: 20, 65, 155, 162, 163, 328, 350

- Bugolobi: 330
- Building (activities): 20, 54, 55, 56, 85, 90, 94, 117, 268, 269, 278-280, 289, 291, 307, 309, 311, 312, 328, 365, 435-436, 443, 444
- Bujumbura: 235
- Bukoba: 390, 391
- Burhanuddin Saheb (*El Mutlaq* al Dai al Fatimi Syedna Muhammed): 99, 267, 270, 273, 275
- Burkina Faso: 232
- Burqah* or *burka*: 228, 394
- Burton (Andrew): 382, 383, 405
- Burundi: 73, 101, 114, 127, 235, 379
- Business: 42, 45, 47, 51, 52-53, 73, 249, 255, 278, 281-293, 411, 414, 427, **430-432**, 433, 435-438, 442-443, 444-445
- Business in general: 55, 71, 96, 103, 117, 154, 157, 168, 221, 231, 278, 282, 290, 333, **343**, 369, 370, 378, 396, 413, **430-431**
- Business funding: 228, 229, 249-250, 252-253, **293-295**, 427
- Business partnership: see Mutual assistance
- Business (retailers; also see *dukawallah*) : 31, 49, 55, 56, 70, 104, 127, 157, 168, 173, 229, 278, 279, 282, 295, **299-301**, 328, 329, 331, 334, 343, 351, 366, 368, 373, 374, 376, 380, 381, 383, 387, 391-392, 394, 396, 412, 416, 430, 431, **436-437**, **439-440**, 441, 444 and photos
- Business shipping: 17, 18, 25, 55, 56, 96, 290, 361, 374, 378, 432
- Business (supply in large quantities): 49, 56, 269, 278, 311, 346, 366
- Business (wholesale): 25, 49, 127, 157, 278, 279, 300, 331, 343, 351, 366, 368, 411, 418, 425, 430
- Butchery: 282, 289, 434-435
- Buziga: 330
- C.C.M. (*Chama Cha Mapinduzi*): 390, 391
- Çadaqa (alm): 238
- Cairo: 212, 224, 248, 262, 264, 438)
- Calas (Bernard): 5, 136, 154, 164, 165, 177, 395, 405
- Calcutta: 22
- Canada: 58, 67, 73, 88, 95, 115, 164, 165, 211, 231, 232, 237, 246, 253, 272, 274, 275, 323, 335, 341, 363, 388, 401, 432, 433, 435
- Caplan (P.): 373, 375, 405
- Carpenters: 20, 56, 86, 90, 207, 290, 291, 309, 328, 436
- Caste (also see Outcastes and Untouchables): 29, 32, **33-34**, 35, 39, **42-44**, **53-56**, 57, **79-82**, **83-87**, 90, 92-95, 104, 105, 203, 204, 206, **207**, 208, 212, 263, 286, **289-291**, 305, 306, 307, 310, 312, 316, 331, 333, 346, 364-366, 368, 375, 378, 409, 410, 418, 419, 431

- Castel (Robert): 249, 257
- Catholics: see Christians
- Cement (industry): 46
- Cemetery: see Funerals
- Census: 25, 28, 110-112, 114, 115, 118, 119, 121, 123, 126-129, 132, 133, 135-137, 139, 148, 151, 156-158, 160, 161, 163, 164, 169, 170, 173-176, **178-190**, 192, 217, 221, 268, 304, 336, 338, 380
- Central Asia: 95, 225
- Chab (L.): 48
- Chaga: 431
- Chama Cha Mapinduzi*: see C.C.M.
- Chandaria (D.H.): 46, 50
- Chandaria (Maganlal): 46
- Chandaria (Manu): 46, 51, 89, **443-444**
- Chandaria (Nitin): 46
- Chande (Girish): 46, 48
- Charlery de la Masselière (Bernard): 5, 109
- Charton-Bigot (Hélène): 75
- Chemicals (industry): 46, 55, 97, 279, 280, 281
- Children (also see schools): 197, 218, 241, 242, 256, 400
- China: 169, 297, 373, 430
- Chinese: 70, 170, 342
- Chitnis (Rashmin): 5, 66
- Choti jat*: 43, 207, 208
- Chrétien (Jean-Pierre): 18, 75
- Christianity: 102
- Christians (also see Goans): 32, 33, 37, 80, **104-105**, 125, 126, 203, 208, 246, 326, 347, 370, 375, 431
- Churchill (Winston): 23
- Cinema: 69, 195, 196, 199, 282, 440, 441
- Citizenship: 27, 29, 34, 64, **65-66**, **71-72**, 74, 97, 101, 110, 127, 132, **147-153**, 169, 230, 231, 324, 336, 340, 344, 351, 386, 387, 413, 420, 425
- Civil servants: 104-105, 117, 157, 290, 308, 332, 334, 381, 396, 412, 435
- Clan: 191, 203, 368, 389
- Clandestine immigration: see "rockets"
- Cleaning (manual and industrial; also see Launderers): 54, 56
- Clementin Ojha (Catherine): 75, 104, 106
- Clitoridectomy: 265
- Clothing (confection and trade): 54, 79, 105, 278, 282, 289, 309, 369

- Clothing, finery: 40-41, 56, 99, **196**, 201-202, 229, 265, 315, 368, 394, 411, 426, 427, 436, 438, 439, 441
- Clubs: 25, 34, **60-61**, 86, 94, **196**, 198, 241, 274, 318, 323, 395, 418, 433, 444
- Cobblers (also see Leather and Shoes): 54, 90, 289, 290, 365
- Coffee: 47, 48, 66, 101, 332, 429, 443
- Colony, colonisation: 17, 18, 19, 34, 90, 110, 113, 114, 116, 155, 304, 327-330, 332-333, 336, 362, 371, 372, **375-385**, 410, 412, 413, 428
- COMESA: see Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
- Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA): 278, 297
- Commonwealth: 73, 336
- Community Labour Division: 35, 45, 47, 56, 71, 289-291
- Comoros, Comorians: 18, 101, 393
- Confectioners: 83, 282, 426
- Confederation of Tanzania Industries: 392
- Conflicts between Indian African communities: 56
- Conflicts within Indian African communities: 234, 235, 239, 240, 255
- Congo, Congolese: 176, 226, 232, 235
- Constantin (François): 75, 92, 106
- Cooks: 20, 83, 195, 290, 291, 362, 396, 411, 427
- Cormack (Richard): 13
- Corruption: see Fraud and dishonest conduct
- Cosmopolitanism: 73, 221-258 (passim), 253, 391, 413, 417, 432, 433, 438
- Cotton: 300, 301, 329, 330, 332, 341
- Coupland (R.): 113, 177
- Craftman (men): see artisan
- Credit: see Loan on interest
- Creole: 16
- Crozon (Ariane): 387, 390, 391, 405
- Cuisine, diet: 35, 36, 37, **38-40**, 89, 91, 195, **394-396**, 402, 410, 427, 442
- Culture(s) (African): 57, **410**, 411
- Culture (Indian): 35-40, 57, 65, **68-70**, 72, 191-219, 248, 331, 335, 394, **409-411**, 413
- Cussac (Anne): 75, 82, 106
- Cutch (or Kutch): 85, 93, 260, 308, 362, 375, 431, 444

- Cutchi (or Kutchi): 37, 38, 39, 52, 55, 56, 59, 61, 80, 85, 87, 93, 198, 307, 308, 312-313, 315, 316-319, 322, 364, 366, 375, 433-434, 435
- Daftary (Farhad): 225, 230, 233, 241, 257
- Dahya (B.W.): 197, 219
- Dai: 99, 223, 225, 260, 264-274, 438
- Daily Nation*: 72, 97, 252, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420
- Dalit* ("Untouchable"): 34
- Damas: 400
- Dance: 69, 195, 199-200, 202, 365, 370, 401
- Dar es Salaam: 15, 17, 58, 64, 89, 93, 101, 117, 126, 127, 195, 210, 246, 248, 252, 328, 363, 367, 374-376, 380-383, 387, 392, 393-396, 398-403, 430, 431, 441
- Darji (weavers and tailors): 44, 54, 56, 79, 86, 207, 289, 290, 306, 309-310, 322, 326
- Darkhana* (Ismaili province): 233, 235
- Dasond* (dime): 226, 238
- Dass (Mamgal): 24
- Daudi or Dawdi or Dawoodi: see Bohra
- Dave (K.): 47
- Dave (P.J.): 48
- Dawda (H.): 46
- Delf (George): 11
- Delhi, New Delhi: 17, 22, 425
- Delicatssen: 289
- Democracy: 35, 310
- Democratic Party: 390, 391
- Deplechin (J.): 376, 377, 405
- Desai (Anita): 213
- Desai (Manihal): 24, 26
- Desai (N.): 26, 76
- Devjee (Nasim): 50
- Devonshire (Lord): 24
- Devonshire White Paper: 23
- Dewji (Gulamabbas): 65
- Dhaka: 400
- Dhobi: 54, 56, 79, 80, 86, 93, 289, 290, 326, 365, 431
- Dhow(s): 17, 18, 20, 21, 235, 317, 427, 444 and photo
- Diamond Plaza: 69, 198, 441
- Diet: see "Cuisine"
- Dilwara (Rajasthan): 88

- Division (socio-économique): 27, 174, 334, 335, 346, 389, 391, 392, 394-398, 400, 419
- Division of labour (community): 35, 45, 47, 56, 71, 289-291
- Division of labour (ethnic): 35, 45, 305, 332, 334
- Divorce: 42, 172, 217, 218, 310
- Diwali: 264, 288, 365, 368, 413, 417, 418
- Djiva* ("born twice"): 82, 85, 208
- Doctors, physicians: 52, 54, 86, 94, 97, 103, 104, 105, 247, 269, 311, 314, 366, 369, 432
- Dodoma: 127
- Domestic appliance (industry): 47, 56, 97, 280
- Domestic workers: 195, 197, 334, 351-352, 362, 375, 378, 396, 402, 411, 412, 428, 431, 442
- Doodia (Manilal): 51, 89
- Doshi (Kokila): 5
- Dowry: see matrimonial benefits
- Dry cleaners (see also Cleaning): 54, 56, 90, 93, 289, 290, 328, 365
- Dubai: 212, 294, 412, 437
- Dukawallah*: 31, 70, 85, 113, 268, 299-301, 329, 331-332, 362, 383, 439-440
- Dumont (Loris): 378, 405
- Durga: 368
- Dushambe: 400
- Dutta (B.K.): 51
- East African Muslim Welfare Society: 92, 98, 314
- East Indian Company: 376
- Eastleigh: 435
- Economic liberalization: 388-393
- Education, level of education (also see Children and Schools): 197, 218
- Egypt: 160, 223, 224, 260, 263, 265, 267, 426, 437
- Ehrich (C.): 333, 353
- Eldoret: 48, 88, 133, 135, 140, 141, 187, 235, 244, 268, 270
- Elections: 65, 66, 275, 297, 340, 350
- Electric (production): 47, 97, 249, 280
- Electrical goods (industry): 47, 56, 97, 280
- Embu: 415
- Emigration (secondary): 73-74, 323-324, 336, 363, 388
- Employees, technicians: 168-169, 174, 292, 296, 362, 369, 396, 435, 438

- Ename (Alijah): 418
- Engineer (Asghar Ali): 259, 262, 267, 275
- Engineer (Navin): 52
- Engineer(s), 86, 94, 290, 296, 311, 366, 369, 425, 435, 443
- English: see British
- Entebbe: 330
- Entreprise: 42, 45, 47, 51, 52-53, 73, 249, 255, 278, 281-293, 411, 414, 427, **430-432**, 433, 435-438, 442-443, 444-445
- Ethiopia: 135, 140, 182, 183
- Ethnic (variable): 110, 111, 184
- Ethnic Labour Division: see Division of labour
- Excision: 100
- Expulsion: 27, 28, 129, 154, **164-168**, 176, 231, 296, 304, 330, 334, **337-338**, 342, 344, 347, 388, 413, 420
- Extreme-Orient: 437
- Family: 31, 41-42, 52-53, **191-219**, 283, 292, 293, 317, 331, **366-369**, 425, 428, 430-432, 441-442
- Family (joint): 41, 42, 52, **191-194**, 331, **366-367**
- Far East: 437
- Farmer(s): 21, 33, 48, 79, 85, 90, 290, 376, 377, 412, 432, 440
- Fatimides: 98, 100, 224, 260, 262, 263, 264
- Ferguson (E.): 378, 405, 407
- Fida'i* (martyr fighter): 224, 225
- Financing of enterprises: 228, 229, 249-250, 252-253, **293-295**, 427
- Fisc : see Taxes
- Fishing (industrial): 47, 97, 117
- Flowers (export): see Horticulture
- Food processing (industry): 46, 47, 54, 55, 85, 89, 90, 97, 101, 250, 278, 279, 280, 304, 308, 311, 312, 317, 318, 332, 343
- Food prohibitions: 99, 304, 378, 434
- Forbidden foodstuffs: 99, 304, 378, 434
- Forbidden marriages: 202, 203
- FORD Asili: 415, 419, 420
- Forrest (Tom): 164, 165, 169, 170, 177
- Fouère (Marie-Aude): 18, 19, 27, 113, 392, 405, 411
- France, French: 232, 253, 376, 442, 443
- Fraud and dishonest conduct: 28, 30, 47, 65, 71, 132, 297, 335, 346, 387, 391, 392, 411, 412, 414, 416, 417, 420, 421
- Freemasonry: 86
- Fruits and vegetables (exportation): 48, 97, 250, 442

- Funerals: 84, 103, 231, 240, 262, 265, 266, 273, 274, 323, 365, 367, 368, 383
- Gama (Vasco de): 361, 374
- Gama Pinto (Pio): 26
- Gandhi (Mahatma): 43, 86
- Ganesh: 288, 301
- Garages, garage owners and mechanics, services stations: see Automobiles
- Gautama (Krishan): 65
- Geographic mobility: 31, 73-74, 139, 165, 246, 423-424, 426-427, 430-433, 437-438
- Germans and German colonial rule: 19, 23, 34, 113, 115, 362, 378, 379-381, 382, 442
- German East Africa, German colonial rule: 23, 24, 34, 97, 113, 379-382
- Ghai (Dharam): 11, 21, 25, 26, 76
- Ghai (Yash Pal): 11, 21, 26, 65, 76
- Giblin (J.L.): 381, 405
- Gidoomal (family): 50
- Gikuyu: 28, 38, 47, 70, 102, 210, 275, 301, 304, 318, 411, 434, 436
- Ginan* (religious poem): 226, 240, 241
- Glass (industry and trade): 55, 100, 101, 268, 279, 280, 289-291, 315, 436-437
- Globalisation: 31-32
- Gnati*: see *jati*
- Goa: 104, 155, 347, 362, 364
- Goans (also see Christians): 19, 37, 56, 65, 80, 81, 91, 97, 105, 114-118, 122-124, 126, 130, 131, 162, 291, 326, 333, 362-366, 443
- Golas (Valerie): 177, 180
- Gold and jewellery trade: 56 (see also jewellers)
- Goldenberg (scandal): 392
- Goldsmith, jewellery trade: 56
- Gomes (Nathalie): 75, 92, 98, 100, 106
- Goody (Jack): 17, 54, 76
- Gorvieux: see Aiglemont
- Great Britain: 19, 31, 52, 58, 67, 73, 87, 88, 95, 100, 105, 132, 164, 165, 209, 211, 231, 232, 237, 253, 274, 294, 318, 319, 323, 335, 336, 337, 348, 363, 364, 376, 403, 416, 426, 428, 432, 433, 435, 438
- Great Lakes: 155
- Grants and Review Boards: 234, 235

- Gregory (Robert G.): 11, 21, 22, 24, 76, 328, 353, 375, 376, 378, 384, 385, 387, 405
- Grignon (François): 28, 45, 47, 51, 76, 77, 252, 257, 392, 405
- Gujabhai Jethwa (Harisinh): 310
- Gujarat: 17, 18, 20, 21, 67, 68, 69, 81, 83, 85, 87, 88, 93, 94, 95, 99, 101, 102, 103, 127, 191, 192, 203, 211, 214, 223, 260, 308, 313, 315, 342, 362, 364, 375, 378, 425, 430, 431, 440, 444
- Gujarati: 34, 37, 38, 39, 54, 59, 62, 81, 95, 99, 191, 201, 202, 228, 264, 286, 304, 307, 312-313, 316-319, 322, 364, 365, 368, 375, 411, 426, 432, 440
- Gulam Dewji (Mohamed): 65
- Gulu: 347
- Gurjar or Gurjar Sutar (carpenter): see Sutar
- Gurwitz (Hanita): 38, 69, 76, 206, 217, 219
- Hachichi*: 225
- Hadith*: 95, 238
- Hadjivayanis (G.): 378, 405
- Haider (Rizwan): 50
- Hairdressing (salons), hairdressers: 20, 56, 80, 282, 289, 290, 365, 366
- Hajam: 80
- Hammann (Loris): 347, 353
- Hanefite (rite): 93
- Harambee*: 415
- Hardware, Hardware shops: 55, 56, 100, 101, 268, 269, 278, 279, 282, 289, 291, 315, 369, 436-437
- Harijan* ("Untouchable"): 34
- Harris (Peter): 50
- Hashish*: 225
- Hassanali (Hassan Fakhrudin): 5
- Hassanali (Mohamed Ali): 273, 275
- Hebatullah (Hussein): 266, 268
- Heilman (B.): 389, 405
- Heritage: 41, 52, 53, 205, 283-285, 289, 292, 342, 367, 368
- Highridge: 136, 137, 139
- Himbara (David): 45, 51, 76
- Hindi: 38, 62, 69, 81, 104, 191, 202, 299, 304, 364, 365, 368, 426, 440
- Hindu Council: 54, 65, 66, 72, 81, 306, 307, 311, 312, 317, 322
- Hinduism: 17, 36, 37, 87, 89, 92, 93, 95, 98, 99, 101, 104, 205, 212, 217, 264, 322, 409, 411

- Hindus, Hinduists: 24, 32, 33, 38, 41, 42, 46, 48, 50, 51, 54-57, 60, 61, 65, 69, 70, 73, 74, 80, **81-91**, 93, 102, 125, 126, 158, 164, 193, 198, 201, 202, 204, 205, 207-209, 212-214, 217, 246, 268, 286, 287, 288, 289, 300, 301, 305, **306-313**, 321, 332, 333, 347, 348, 351, 362, 364, 365, 368, 375, 376, 393, 394, 410, 425, 428-431, 433, 442
- Hobbies: 61, 61, 69, 195-196, **198-202**, 370, 378, 395-396
- Holi (festival): 365, 368
- Hollingsworth (L.W.): 11, 276, 376, 406
- Homa Bay: 425
- Hong Kong: 430
- Hope (Stanley): 336, 353
- Horticulture: 48, 318
- Horton (M.): 373, 406
- Hospitals: 25, 34, 234, 244, **247**, 270, 347, 352, 378, 398, 399
- Hotel industry, hotels: 29, 34, 49, 60, 71, 97, 250, 314, 395
- House workers: 195, 197, 334, 351-352, 362, 375, 378, 396, 402, 411, 412, 428, 431, 442
- Hussein (Imam): 262
- Hyder (Mohamed): 241
- Hyderabad: 342, 400
- Hypergamic marriage: 204, 207, 211, 212, 237, 32
- Ibingira (Grace): 333, 353
- Ibn Battuta: 373
- Identity(ies): 31, 69, 105, 334, 340-341, 375, 377, 379, 382, 386, 389, 393, 396, 399, 404
- Iganga: 347
- Igunga: 65
- Iliffe (J.): 375, 381, 384, 385, 406
- Imam, imamate: 95, 96, 98, 99, 101, 209, 216, 221-276 (*passim*), 347, 399, 438
- Imperial British East Africa Company: 20, 21, 444
- Import-export: 17, 29, 49, 52, 97, 311, 343, **430-431**, 432, 443, 444
- Indentured labourers*: 21
- Independence: 24, 35, 86, 105, 109, 129, 163, 176, 228, 231, 301, 307, 336, 363, 385, 386, 420
- India: 16, 18, 19, 20, 22-24, 28, 30, 32, 34, 35, 42, 44, 46, 61, 63, **66-70**, 74, 80, 81-84, 86, 88, 90, 92, 93, 95, 96, 99-101, 103-105, 109, 112, 115, 119, 120, 132, 137, 139-141, 150-153, 155, 161, 163-165, 182, 191, 199, 202-205, 211, 212, 223, 226, 230-233, 235, 238, 241, 259, 260, 266-268, 272-274, 277, 286, 291, 294, 296, 304, 309, 315, 317, 318, 322, 329, 334,

- 342, 347, 348, 351, 362, **363-364**, 370, 373-376, 378, 382, 384, 399, 403, 411, 413, 416, 421, 423-425, 428, 430-433, 435-437, 439-441, 444
- India (South): 313, 322
 - Indian Association of Uganda: 348, 350
 - Indian culture: **35-40**, 57, 65, **68-70**, 72, 191-219, 248, 331, 335, 394, **409-411**, 413
 - Indian Merchants' Association: 380-381
 - Indian music: 61, 69, 105, 195, 199, 202, 215, 363, 370, 395
 - Indian Ocean: 12, 16, 17, 24, 49, 96, 103, 168, 195, 317, 373, 374, 375, 378, 393, 431
 - Indian-Pakistani separation: 69, 90, 371, 381, 384
 - Indians (citizens): 132, **147-153**, 169, 170, 178, 180, 181, 184, 185, 336, 340, 342
 - Indonesia: 347, 430
 - Industrial fishing: 47, 97, 117
 - Industrial packaging: 46, 56, 97, 250, 280, 282
 - Industrial Promotion Buildings: 97, 252, 253
 - Industrial Promotion Services: 97 229, 249, 251, 256, 294
 - Industry, industrial: 25, 28, 29, **45-48**, 71, 85, 88, 96, 97, 101, 103, 154, 157, 168, 221, 229, 249, 250, 269, **278-281**, 311, 314, 332, **343**, 369, 388, 389, 411, 418, 421, 425, 431, 442-444
 - Information technology: 101, 269, 279, 282, 343, 369, 426, 438
 - Inheritance: 41, 53, 205, **283-285**, 289, 367, 368
 - Insecurity: 58, 296, 344, 383, 428
 - Institute of Ismaili Studies: 221, 222, 255, 258
 - Instruction (level): see Shools
 - Insurances: 49, 50, **51**, 56, 97, 101, 117, 228, 229, 249, **251-253**, 269, 278, 282, 311, 343, 442, 443
 - Integration (also see Citizenship and Policy): 31, 35, 64, 65, **71-75**, 341, 344-346, 372-374
 - Intercommunity relations: **61-62**, 240, 241, 307, 321, 370
 - International Conciliation and Arbitration Boards: 234
 - Internet: 200, 202, 212, 282, 318, 363, 396, 427, 431
 - Investment Trust: 228, 249
 - IPS: see Industrial Promotion Services
 - Iran: 232, 233, 416
 - Iraq: 223
 - Ireland: 438
 - Islam: 16, 17, 89, 92, 96, 100, 102, 221-276, 333, 373, 375
 - Islam and Hinduism: 92, 93, 95, 98, 99, 102, 229, 254, 260, 263, 264

- Islamic Foundation: 92, 314
- Ismailia Constitution: 226, **230-236**, 238, 243, 255
- Ismailia Supreme Council: 98
- Ismailis, Ismailism: 17-19, 29, 38, 40, 42, 46-49, 51, 53, 55, 56, 59-61, 64-66, 70, 73, 74, 80-82, 84, **87-89**, 92, **94-98**, 99-102, 127, 158, 201, 204, 208, 209, 214, 215, **221-258**, 260-269, 275, 287, 289-292, 300, 314, 323, 326, 329, 332, 334, 341, 347, 351, 362-364, 368, 385, 393, **399-403**, 411, **425-426**, 427, 434, 435
- Isogamic marriage: 207, 212, 319
- Ithnasheri: 46, 48, 50, 55, 59, 60, 80, 94, 99, **101-102**, 198, 200, 208, 218, 222, 259, 262, 286, 290, 300, 315, 323, 326, 347, 352, 362-364, 368, 400, 416, **432-433**, 442-443
- Ivory Coast: 232

- Jaffer (Sherali Bandali): 330, 341
- Jain (J.C.): 20, 76
- Jainism: 87
- Jains: 18, 32, 33, 39, 45, 48, 53, 55, 56, 59-61, 80-82, **87-89**, 96, 125, 193, 198, 201-204, 208, 213, 217, 246, 286-288, 290, 291, 301, 306, 307, 309, 311-312, 321, 322, 326, 347, 348, 375, 393, 428, **430-432**, **440-442**, 443-444
- Jalaram (worship): 288
- Jalota (A.K.): 50
- Jamaica: 328
- Jamal (A.H.): 386
- Jamal (Vali): 331, 353
- Jamatkhana*: **231-236**, 239-242
- Jamnagar: 88
- Janmohamed (A.): 50
- Jani (P.K.): 51
- Japan: 169, 364
- Japanese: 170, 437
- Jat: 48, 90, 204
- Jati* (also see Castes): 33, 34, 42-44, 54, 81, 84-86, 92, 93, 158, 203, 207, 208, 289, 306, 314, 365, 367, 431
- Jeevanjee (Alibhai): 20, 23, 24, 269, 271, 272, 413, **444-445**
- Jekabhai (Amin Chrunabai): 333
- Jewell (John): 18, 76
- Jewellers, Jewellery: 54, 56, 80, 207, 289, 290, 365, 366
- Jhaveri (K.M.): 276

- Jihad*: 99, 261
- Jinga: 21, 89
- Jinja: 162, 163, 172, 332, 347
- Johnston (Sir Harry): 329
- Joint family: 41, 42, 52, **191-194**, 331, **366-367**
- Jordan: 426
- Jotawa*: 209-210
- Julahaz (weavers): 90
- Jutha*: see Purity
- K (“five K” of the Sikhs): 89
- Kabul: 400
- Kachch: 313
- Kakamega: 415
- Kaira: 85, 204, 308
- Kajiado: 136
- Kalenjin: 304
- Kamani (family): 48
- Kamaria*: 230, 231
- Kamba: 48, 424, 431, 434
- Kampala: 15, 21, 31, 37, 58, 65, 70, 87, 88, 94, 97, 162, 163, 168, 172, 227, 245, 248, 252, 268, 327, 329, **330**, 333, 334, 337, 338, 340, 341, 347, **349**, 350, 400, 414, 430
- Kamuli: 347
- Kanaani (Manu): 350
- Kankani or Konkani: 105, 364, 375
- Kantaria (Bimal): 46
- Kantaria (R. C.): 51
- Kantaria (Rosik): 51
- KANU: 26, 416, 417, 419, 420, 421
- Kapadia (K.M.): 41, 52, 76, 192, 219
- Kapila (Neera): 20, 21, 76
- Kapur Dromson (Neera): 5, 13, 21, 23, 36, 58, 61, 69, 76, 410, 421
- Karachi: 247, 269, 272, 400, 444
- Karamoja: 331
- Karia (Pradip): 65
- Karia (Ravi): 52
- Kariakoo: 383, 387, 392, 395
- Kariokor: 136, 137, 139
- Karmali (Ali Mohamed): 332, 341
- Kartwe: 330

- Karume (Abeid Amani): 387
- Kashmiri, Kashmire: 82, 94, 102
- Kaskazi* (winter monsoon): 17
- Kassam (Jaffar): 65
- Kassam (Nooreen): 258
- Kathiawar: 192, 308, 362, 375
- Katijabay (Murdin): 5
- Kaunda Kenneth: 28
- Kayunga: 347
- Kazakhstan: 223, 232
- Kennedy Jr (R.E.): 77, 103, 106
- Kenya: *passim*
- Kenya Association of Manufacturers: 45, 294, 317, 443
- Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry: 418
- Kenya Times*: 416, 417, 418, 420, 421
- Kenyatta (family): 50, 443
- Kenyatta (Jomo): 26, 27, 65, 415, 437, 443
- Kepel (Gilles): 238, 257
- Kerala: 105, 214, 342
- Kerbala (martyr): 365
- Keshavjee (family): 258
- Khamis (K.S.): 245, 257
- Khamsi*: 266
- Khan (A.E.): 277, 297
- Khan (Zafrullah): 50
- Khiddu-Makubuya (Edward): 164
- Khimjee (Sultan): 50
- Khoja: see Ismailis
- Kiambu: 136, 279
- Kibera: 135, 138, 241
- Kibwezi: 21
- Kigali: 235
- Kigoma: 381
- Kijungu*: 330
- Kilimani: 136, 137, 138
- Kilwa: 65
- Kimeru: 38
- King (A.): 333, 354
- Kinshasa: 235, 400
- Kipande* (work permit): 34

- Kirghizstan: 223, 232, 400
- Kirinyaga: 54, 442
- Kissi: 424
- Kisumu: 21, 47, 48, 65, 88, 133, 135, 140, 141, 187, 227, 235, 244, 247, 268, 270, 417, 423, 430, 441
- Kitoro: 330
- Kitui: 270
- Kivu: 101
- Kiyindi*: 330
- Kokan: 94
- Kokni: 55, 56, 64, 80, 93, 94, 364, 366
- Koran: 95, 99, 102, 222, 227, 260, 288, 427
- Korea: 431, 433
- Krishna: 87, 90, 102, 288, 301, 308
- Kshatriya*: 33, 34, 43, 79, 82, 84, 85, 90, 99, 104, 207, 208, 306, 310, 322, 326, 365
- Kumbhar (potters): 44, 54, 80, 86, 93, 290, 291, 306, 308-309, 322, 326, 364-366, 433-434
- Kurjee (M.): 51
- Kutch, Kutchi: see Cutch, Cutchi
- Kuzi* (summer monsoon): 17
- Lachaier (Pierre): 52, 53, 77, 303, 313
- Lahore: 17, 61
- Lakshmi: 288, 301
- Laljee (Diamond): 46, 51
- Lamu: 15, 16, 18, 64, 96, 100, 101, 113, 140, 210, 268, 270, 328, 432
- Landy (Frédéric): 21, 77
- Langata: 271
- Languages: 35, 36, 37, 38, 58, 62, 69, 73, 103, 104, 202, 228, 230, 246, 264, 304, 364-365, 398, 411, 434
- Launders (also see Cleaning): 54, 56, 90, 93, 289, 290, 328, 365
- Lavington: 136, 137, 138
- Le Cour Grandmaison (Colette): 60, 70, 95, 96, 97, 98, 399
- Le Guennec-Coppens (Françoise): 373, 375, 405
- Leaders International Forum: 233
- Leakey (Philip): 415
- Leather (processing and industry): 47, 54, 55, 97, 250, 279, 280, 289
- Legislative Council (Legco): 23, 24, 269, 333, 337, 444
- Leva: 85, 204, 308
- Levirate: 192, 218

- Lewis (Bernard): 222, 223, 257
- Liberal professions: 25, 52, 97, 117, 168-169, 269, 275, 282, 290, 294, 366
- Libya: 102
- Limuru: 21, 317
- Lineage: 52, 191, 192, 203, 263, 368
- Loan on interest, credit: 54-55, 96, 100, 228, 229, 262, 268, 269, 287, 294, 300, 332, 333, 412, 427, 428
- Lobo (L.): 397, 406
- Lofchie (M.F.): 113, 373, 374, 380, 406
- Lohana: 38, 39, 43, 44, 46-48, 51, 52-56, 73, 79, 82, 85, 86, 88, 95, 198, 204, 207, 226, 290, 292, 306, 307, 319, 320, 322, 326, 332, 351, 363, 365, 393, 411, 429, 442
- Lugard (Frederick): 328, 353
- Luhar (blacksmiths): 54, 80, 86, 90, 93, 290, 291, 366, 435
- Luo: 70, 301, 401, 420, 434
- Luqmani (Ahmed): 270, 276
- Luwero: 330, 341
- Maasai: 304, 410, 425
- Machakos: 21, 136
- Madagascar: 18, 24, 58, 100, 101, 232, 253, 259, 432, 438, 440
- Madhvani (family): 341
- Madhvani (Jayant): 332
- Madhvani (Nimisha): 65
- Madhvani (Ronak): 332
- Madras: 20
- Madrassa* or *medrassa*: 244, 245, 264
- Mafia: 16, 113, 118, 123
- Maghreb: 223
- Magic: 197
- Mahjan (family): 48
- Maharaj (Brij): 26, 27, 77
- Maharashtra: 17, 55, 67, 80, 86, 94, 95, 103, 342, 364, 375, 425
- Maharashtra Mandal: 326
- Mahavir (worship): 288
- Mahvish (worship): 288
- Makerere (University): 414
- Makindu: 21
- Malabar: 18
- Malawi: 15, 24, 25, 443

- Malaysia: 272, 347, 442
- Malde (R.): 46
- Mali: 232
- Malindi: 18, 20, 64, 113, 140, 210, 268, 270, 328, 361, 411, 424, 436
- Mamdani (M.): 329, 331, 332, 333, 337, 353
- Mangat (J.S.): 11, 18, 77, 113, 177, 328, 354, 374, 381, 406
- Manu or Manor, Manu's laws: 32, 203, 216
- Manvi (K.N.): 50
- Manyara (Lake): 251
- Manual workers, manual jobs: see Artisans
- Maputo: 251, 400
- Marathi: 375
- Mariakani : 270
- Marital prohibitions: 202, 203
- Maritime trade: 17, 18, 25, 55, 56, 96, 290, 361, 374, 378, 432
- Marriage: 42, **62-64**, 68, 75, 84, 86, 89, 91, 93, 102, 104, 152, 160, 171, 172, **197-219**, 231, 232, **236-237**, 263, 264, 265, 266, 272, 274, **285-286**, 309, 312, 315, 319-320, 334, 346, 347, 362, 365, 367, **368**, 370, 373, 375, 378, 409, 410, 417, 418, 430, 432
- Marriage (arranged): **206-208**, 212, 266, 285, 286, 315, **319-320**, 366, 424, 438, 440
- Marriage (ceremony): **214-216** and photos
- Marriage by correspondence: 211-212
- Marriage (hypergamic): 204, 207, 211, 212, 237, 320
- Marriage (isogamic): 207, 212, 319
- Marriage(s) (mixed): **63-64**, 75, 91, **208-210**, 237, **286**, 315, 320, 334, 347, 370, 387, 399, 400, 413, 418, 435, 442
- Martin (Denis-Constant): 388, 405
- Martyrs: 262
- Masaka: 162, 347
- Masaki: 395
- Mascareignes: 24, 409
- Mascate: 361, 374
- Masons: see Building
- Massignon (Loris): 223
- Matam* (expiation): 262
- Mathare Valley: 241
- Mathur (Arun): 50
- Matiba (Kenneth): 415, 419, 420, 421
- Matrimonial benefits: **212-213**, 263, 309, 320, 424

- Maulid (festival): 365
- Maupeu (Hervé): 77, 92, 106
- Maurer (M.): 396, 406
- Mauritius (Island): 16, 24, 101, 253, 328, 440, 443
- Mazrui (A.): 388, 406
- Mbale: 162, 172, 173, 347
- Mbarara: 347
- Mbeya: 127
- Mbiko: 347
- Mc Caa (Robert): 180
- Mdundo (Minael); 370
- Mecca: 224, 262
- Medina: 224
- Medjee (Dedjee): 48, 86
- Mehta (family): 89
- Mehta (Bharat): 52
- Mehta (Ketann): 52
- Mehta (Malindra): 51
- Mehta (P.): 47, 48
- Mehtah (Naresh): 47
- Memon (cloth traders): 54, 56, 80, 93, 95, 290, 300, 315, 364, 435,

439-440

- Mengi (Reginald A.): 392
- Merali (Ayaz): 51
- Merali (Naushad): 46, 48, 442-443
- Merali (Sameer): 50, 101
- Merchant: see Trader
- Meru: 38
- Metallurgy (metal industry): 46, 56, 250, 278, 279, 280, 291, 311, 443
- Metha (Nanji Kalidas): 332, 353
- Middle-East: 17, 31, 67, 73, 95, 100, 166, 375, 399, 426, 438
- Middleton (J.): 373, 406
- Miller (Charles): 21, 77
- Mines and extractive industry: 280
- Miquel (André): 223, 257
- Mithaq* (oath of allegiance): 267, 272, 274
- Mittelman (J.H.): 333, 334, 335, 354
- Mixed marriage(s): 63-64, 75, 91, 208-210, 237, 286, 315, 320, 334, 347, 370, 387, 399, 400, 413, 418, 435, 442
- Mkapa (Benjamin): 391, 400

- Mlahagwa (J.R.): 381, 406
- Mobility (geographical): 31, 73-74, 139, 165, 246, 423-424, 426-427, 430-433, 437-438
- Mobility (professional): 31, 54-55, 316, 426, 428
- Mobility (social): 25, 43-44, 45, 53-55, 236, 277, 316, 317, 423-424, 430-432, 434, 441-442
- Mochi or Muci (cobblers): 44, 54, 55, 79, 86, 289, 290, 326, 365
- Mogadishu: 18, 101, 373
- Moghols, Great Moghols: 17, 39 89, 99, 204, 212, 260
- Mohatta (N.K.): 46
- Moi (arap Daniel): 26, 28, 47, 129, 252, 416, 417, 419, 443
- Mombasa: 15, 18, 20, 23, 26, 31, 37, 49, 58, 60, 64, 70, 87, 88, 93, 94, 96, 97, 101, 103, 105, 113, 131, 133, 135, 140, 141, 187, 195, 197, 198, 200, 210, 221, 226, 227, 235, 241, 244-249, 268, 270-273, 306, 309, 317, 328, 329, 348, 361, 399, 411, 412, 420, 426-428, 429, 430-434, 436, 438, 439, 443, 444
- Monsoon : 17, 361, 373
- Morogoro: 65, 127
- Morris (H. Stephen): 11, 44, 77, 329, 354, 399, 406
- Mortality (rate): 125, 161
- Moshi: 126
- Motwani (J.K.):
- Monsoon: 17, 361, 373
375, 399, 426, 438
- Mother-in-law: 194, 320
- Mozambique: 15, 24, 232, 251
- Mrema (Augustine): 390, 391
- Mtikila (Reverend Christopher): 390, 391
- Muhammad Shah (Sultan): 226
- Muharram (month): 262, 274
- Mukhi* (religious leader): 230, 236, 238, 240
- Mukono: 172, 347
- Multinational: 278
- Mumbai: see Bombay
- Mungeam (G.H.): 13, 77
- Muomero: 65
- Murdock (Peter): 203
- Museveni (Yoweri): 154, 158, 164, 337, 338
- Music (Indian): 61, 69, 105, 195, 199, 202, 215, 363, 370, 395
- Muslim Civic Education Trust: 241

- Muslims: 32, 33, 38, **41-42**, 55, 58, 61, 63, 65, 70, 73, 80, 81 , 90, **91-102**, 125, 126, 164, 198, 201, 203-205, 208, 212-215, 221-276, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 300, 305, 313-315, 322, 326, 330, 332-334, 341, 347, 362-364, 366, 368, 370, 373, 375, 393, 394, 399, 410, 412, 423-430, 431, 432-435, 437-440
- Mutual assistance: 291-296, 299, 427, 436
- Mwanza: 73, 126, 127
- Mwiki: 279
- Mwinyi (Ali Hassan): 388
- Nabudere (D.W.): 329, 333, 354
- Nabuguzi (Emmanuel): 154, 177
- Nagar (Richa): 370, 390, 406
- Nair (Mira): 69
- Nair (Savita): 354
- Nairobi: 15, 31, 37, 57, 58-60, 65, 66, 69, 70, 87, 88, 93, 98, 102, 103, 105, 126, 131, 133, **135-139**, 140, 141, 187, 197-200, 214, 215, 217, 221, 227, 230, 235, 240, 241, 244, 246, 247, 252, 268-274, 279, 281, 306, 309, 400, 414, 418, 423-426, 430, 432, 434-436, 439-443
- Nairobi-Centre: 135, 137, 139
- Nairobi-West: 135, 136, 137, 138
- Naivasha: 48
- Nakamya (Sarah): 327
- Nakuru: 84, 133, 140, 141, 187, 268, 270, 281, **303-326**, 411, 426
- Namaz (prayer): 288
- Namdhari: 90
- Nangaria: 94
- Nanji (Azim): 77, 96, 106, 246, 257
- Narok: 48
- Nathwani (P.): 46
- Nation Media Group: 252
- National Conciliation and Arbitration Boards: 234, 235, 239, 240
- National Union of Kenya Muslims: 92
- Nationalisation: 387
- Nationalism: 64
- Native reserves*: 74
- Nativeness (or Indigeneity): see *Uzawa*
- Navigation: 17, 21
- Navnat: 47, 48, 88, 307, 311, 322, **430-432**
- Navratri: 365, 368
- Nayee or Nayi (barbers): 54, 56, 80, 86, 289, 290, 326

- Nazareth (John): 13
- Nehru (Pandit Jawaharlal): 66
- Nehta (Maresh):
- Nepal: 34
- Nevroz (New Year): 238
- Ngara: 59, 136, 137, 139, 426, 437
- Ngorongoro: 251
- Nichols (C.S.): 226, 257
- Niger: 232
- Nigeria: 443
- Nizar: 95, 224
- Nizarites: see Ismailis
- Njonjo (Charles): 275
- North America: 31, 100, 102, 170, 232
- Northrup (David): 328, 354
- Nowik (Laurent): 15, 24, 25, 28, 30, 31, 58, 81, 91, 192, 211, 217, 231, 304, 340
- Nowrojee (Pheroze): 5
- Nyaggah (M.): 24, 77, 412, 413, 421
- Nyanza: 47, 48, 65, 179, 180, 441
- Nyasaland: 25
- Nyerere (Julius K.): 28, 29, 92, 274, 363, 384, 386, 388, 406
- Nyeri: 38, 268
- O' Brien (J.): 335, 354
- Obote (Milton): 154, 338, 341
- Ocaya (Lakidi Dent): 335, 354
- Odinga (Agnes): 180
- Okereke (O.): 333, 354
- Oloo (Ochieng): 50, 51 77
- Oman, Omanais: 17, 18, 361, 374-377, 379
- Ombongi (Kenneth): 77, 87, 106
- Ominde (S.H.): 33, 77
- Oonk (Gijsbert): 338, 354, 362, 370, 397, 406
- Ormuz: 18
- Osh: 400
- Oshwal: 45, 46, 50, 51, 55, 56, 59, 70, 80, 88, 193, 208, 290, 307, 309, 311, 322, 428, 431, 440-442
- Ost Afrika*: see Eastern Africa, German version
- Otenyo (Eric): 28, 77, 252, 257, 392, 406
- Outcaste: 34, 43, 82, 378, 410

- Oyster Bay: 395
- Pakistan: 17, 18, 32, 34, 61, 66-70, 90, 93, 95, 100-102, 109, 120, 132, 139, 142, 155, 163, 166, 223, 232, 233, 246, 248, 251, 259, 267, 315, 347, 364, 375, 416
- Pakistanis: 118, 122, 123, 124, 126, 140, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 170, 178, 179, 180, 181, 184, 185, 336
- Palestine: 426, 437
- Pangani: 54, 70, 434, 435
- Panikkar (Kevalam): 11
- Pant (Apa): 69
- Paper-making, cardboard industry: 46, 56, 97, 279, 280, 282, 425
- Parekh Sweta: 5
- Parklands: 57, 59, 88, 136, 137, 198, 227, 441
- Parsis: 17, 56, 74, 80, 81, 87, **103-104**, 125, 290, 347, 364, 375
- Partition of India Pakistan: 69, 90, 371, 381, 384
- Pastry: 328
- Pate: 328
- Patel: 21, 39, 43, 46, 48, 55, 56, 59, 79, 82, **85-86**, 87, 97, 204, 208, 268, 290, 292, 300, 306, 307-308, 312, 316-319, 322, 326, 332, 363, 365, 429, 434
- Patel (Bikhu): 52, 86
- Patel (R.): 47, 86
- Patel (R.M.): 48
- Patel (Vijag): 52
- Patel (Zarina): 5, 13, 268, 271, 273, 276, 444, 445
- Patidar: see Patel
- Patterson (John): 21, 78
- Pattni (goldsmiths): see Soni
- Pattni (Kamlesh): 297
- Pattni (Yogesh): 51
- Paunrana (Pradeep): 46
- Pearson (Michael): 11
- Peasants: see Farmer
- Pemba: 16, 18, 113, 118, 123, 127, 328, 374
- Penrad (Jean-Claude): 78, 92, 101, 106
- (*The*) *People*: 421
- Persia: 16, 18, 95, 103, 224, 225, 226, 373
- Persian: 432
- Persian Gulf: 16, 17
- Pharmaceutical (industry): 46, 52, 97, 279, 281, 311, 343

- Pharmacists: 52, 56, 104, 294, 311
- Philanthropy, benevolent activity: 72, 88, 92, 97, 100, 229, 238, 267, 269, 292, 317, 318, 322, 323, 324, 334, 352, 398, 413, 425, 444
- Pilgrimage: 102, 262, 441
- Pir* (guide): 226, 241
- Pitt-Rivers (Julian): 237, 257
- Plastics (Material): 46, 97, 250, 279, 281
- Pneumatics: 46, 101, 443
- Pocock (David): 43, 78
- Politics: 25, 26, 64-66, 74, 86, 275, 297, 337, 349-350, 384-387, 409, 413, 418, 419-421, 444
- Polo (Marco): 225, 257
- Pollution: 32, 39, 41, 44, 57, 83, 100, 195, 301, 362, 409, 410, 411
- Popot (A.K.): 47
- Population: 15, 16, 28-31, 32, 33, 67, 91, 97, 109-190, 326, 340
- Pork meats: 289
- Portuguese, Portugal: 18, 70, 104, 105, 232, 374
- Potters: 54, 80, 90, 93, 289, 290, 291, 306, 365
- Poverty: 53-54, 240, 241, 270, 273, 377, 396
- Prajapati: see Kumbhar
- Press: 38, 49, 69, 72, 97, 252, 269, 391, 392, 409-421, 444
- Pretoria: 235
- Priests: 33, 83-84, 309
- Printing press: 47, 97, 250, 433-434
- Produce dealers (export): 48, 97, 250, 442
- Professional mobility: 31, 54-55, 316, 426, 428
- Professions: 15, 20-22, 25, 29, 31, 34, 35, 42, 43, 54, 55, 83, 87, 90, 94, 97, 103, 104, 117, 157, 168, 174-175, 217, 278, 289-291, 313, 315, 328, 342, 366, 368, 375
- Proselytism, conversions: 98, 102, 312, 411
- Protestants: 104, 364, 365
- Prunier (Gerard): 13, 18, 19, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 31, 47, 66, 78, 80, 81, 97, 104, 105, 106, 109, 113, 114, 128, 154, 155, 156, 158, 162, 177, 231, 257, 300, 378, 388, 390, 392, 406, 413, 421
- Public Works: see Building
- Punjab: 17, 20, 37, 61, 67, 82, 86, 89, 90, 93, 102, 197, 211, 362, 364, 375, 378, 423, 435, 439, 444
- Punjabi: 37, 39, 48, 51, 59, 61, 62, 65, 80, 86, 90, 92-95, 191, 198, 199, 202, 204, 208, 286, 290, 300, 304, 310, 315, 326, 364, 375, 423-425, 428, 434-435, 437-438

- Purity (*jutha*): 39, 83, 194
- Racism: see Stereotypes, prejudices
- Radio: 38, 65, 252, 392
- Railway line (Mombasa-Kampala): **20-21**, 67, 84, 88, 90, 128, 129, 230, 268, 277, 304, 310, 328, 329, 413, 440, 444
- Raimbault (F.): 380, 381, 407
- Raj (masons): 54, 90
- Raja (Suresh): 50
- Rajan (Zahid): 5
- Rajasthan: 17, 20, 34, 70, 82, 84, 88, 197, 212
- Rajput: 34, 74, 84, 306, 310, 322, 326
- Raksha Bandhan: 365
- Rama: 90, 102, 193, 264
- Ramadan: 238, 262, 288
- Ramani (S.V.): 50
- Ramchandani (R.R.): 13, 21, 331, 354
- Ramgharia: 54, 55, 90, 204, 347, 351, 436
- Rawal (N.): 46
- Real estate: 25, 49, 56, 100, 136, 228, 252, 253, 268, 282, 313, 315, 381, 394-395, 412, 419, 420, 425, 429, 443
- Reclus (Élisée): 18, 78
- Reformed Bohras: 42, **100**, 198, 201, 262, 265, 267, 269, **272-274**, **427-430**, **444-445**
- Relationships with Africans: 30, **38-39**, 56, **62-66**, 71-75, 91, 201, 208, **209-210**, 237, 275, 292-293, 296-297, 312, 315, 318, 320, 321, 323, 324, **333-335**, 337, **344-346**, **350-352**, 363, 370, **371-404**, **409-421**, 441
- Religion: **35-37**, 59, 63, 64, **70**, 83, 87, 89, 95, 96, 103, 126, 193, 194, 195, 201, 208, 234, 238, 239, 262, 264, 271, 272, **286-292**, 321, 322, 347, 365, **368**, 411, 429 and photos
- Residence: 25, **57-58**, **192-194**, 205, 216-217, 218, 271, 304-306, 309, 312, 318, 330, **349**, 368, 378, **380-383**, **394-395**, 413, 418, 424, 429, 441, 442 and photos
- Restaurants, restaurant owners, bars: 25, 83, 104, 195, 198, 282, 370, 394-396, 397, 426, 441
- Returnees*: **164-168**, 173, **342-346**, 351
- Reunion (Island): 16, 24, 101, 328
- Rhida*: 265
- Rhodes (Cecil): 19
- Rhodesia: 25
- Rift Valley: 47, 48, 303, 304

- Rizvi (Hassan): 50
- “Rockets”: 29-30, 38, 53, 69, 132, 148, 170, 199, 293, 296, 342, 416, 421, 431
- Rodriguez Torres (Deyssi): 75, 257
- Rotchild (Donald): 11, 208, 219, 413, 421
- Roy (C.): 399, 407
- Roy (Shibani): 276
- Ruparel (Jayant): 5
- Rwanda: 73, 101, 114, 127, 176, 235, 379
- Sabbah (Hasan): 224, 225
- Sadaqa* (alms): 238
- Sadiq Ali (Nawab): 69
- Sadr al-Din (Pir): 226
- Safaris: 329
- Safina: 92
- Said (Seyyid): 361, 374
- Sailors: 80, 93
- Salaries: 20, 293, 296, 384, 392, 397, 402, 413, 414
- Salamieh: 400
- Salvadori (Cynthia): 13, 19, 26, 75, 78, 84, 88, 93, 94, 99, 100, 101, 105, 106, 226, 227, 228, 257, 260, 268, 276, 286, 298, 308, 309, 310, 318, 322, 323, 324, 325, 444, 445
- Samarkande: 248
- Sandhi (Kuldip): 49
- Sanathan Dharmist: 81
- Sanchawala (H.K.): 274, 276
- Sandhu (P.S.): 45
- Sanitary (equipment): 268, 290, 291, 315, 436-437
- Sanskrit: 215
- Sarit Center: 441 and photo
- Sastry (M.P.): 50
- Satpanh* (salvation): 226
- Saunders (Kay): 328, 354
- Savala (N.): 46
- Savani (Shamaz): 50
- Sayyed: 366
- School(s): 25, 34, 58-60, 82, 88, 144-146, 163, 168-169, 175, 198, 199, 200, 201, 217, 227, 228, 229, 234, 236, 241-243, 244-247, 269, 271-272, 282, 304, 308, 310, 312, 330, 341, 345, 347, 350, 351, 352, 369, 378, 393, 394, 398, 399-403, 413, 418, 420, 426-428, 432, 434, 438-440, 441

- Segregation: see Apartheid
- Seidenberg (Dana): 11, 13, 26, 27, 69, 78
- Senegal: 232
- Senior officials: 98, 168-169, 174, 175, 236, 246, 290, 292, 296, 425, 431, 435
- Serengeti: 251
- Sex ratio*: 29, 30, 116, 118, 120, 121, 138, 139, 159, 160, 167-168, 171, 184, 211, 213
- Shafite (rite): 94
- Shah (Bharat): 52
- Shah (Bhavna): 5
- Shah (C.B.): 47
- Shah (H.): 46
- Shah (Kirit): 5
- Shah (M.): 51, 89
- Shah (Mukesh): 46
- Shah (N.): 46, 47
- Shah (Naresh): 52
- Shah (P.): 47
- Shah (R.): 46
- Shah (Sarit): 50
- Shah (Shanti): 48
- Shah (Smita): 5
- Shah (Suli J.): 46
- Shah (Sunil): 5, 46
- Shah (Sushi): 312, 325
- Shah (Usha): 5
- Shah (Vimal): 45, 46, 89
- Shah (Vina): 5
- Shakee Shabir (Ahmed): 65
- Shamji-Dewany (Nasrin): 258
- Shar'ia*: 95, 96, 99, 223, 262
- Sheriff (Abdul): 226, 257, 373, 374, 376, 377, 407
- Shetty (Vasant): 51
- Shia: 32, 42, 56, 64, 80, 91, 92, 94-102, 102, 198, 205, 208, 221-276, 314-315, 323, 332, 347, 364, 375, 393, 399, 432, 436-437, 438, 442-443, 444-445
- Shimoni (Islands): 330
- Shirazi: 375-377, 379, 384, 393
- Shiva: 194, 368

- Shivji (I.): 387, 407
- Shoes (trade and industry; also see Cobblers): 54, 289
- Siddiqi (Jameela): 335, 354
- Sikhs, Sikhism: 17, 20, 26, 32, 33, 38, 39, 41, 42, 48, 49, 54, 55, 56, 60, 61, 63, 69, 74, 80, 81, 82, 84, **89-91**, 96, 97, 125, 196, 199, 204, 208-210, 213, 217, 246, 286, 290, 291, 305, 306, 307, 312, 321, 322, 326, 328, 347, 351, 363, 364, 375, **435-436**
- Simba (Iddi): 390, 407
- Sindh: 17, 18, 95, 197, 223, 226, 241
- Sindhi: 38
- Singapore: 212, 438
- Singaravelou: 69, 74, 78
- Singh: 89
- Singh (Chanan): 65
- Singh (Daleep): 362, 363, 370
- Singh (Jaswan): 26
- Singh (Makham): 26
- Singh Hoogan (Parmorth): 65
- Singida: 65
- Slaves, slavery: 16, 18, 27, 92, 328, 373, 375-377, 416, 420, 429
- Social life: 60-62, **195-202**, 238-242, 271-272, 324, 369, **395-396**, 428, 440, 441
- Social mobility: 25, **43-44**, 45, 53-55, 236, 277, **316**, **317**, 423-424, 430-432, 434, 441-442
- Socio-economic Division: 27, 174, 334, 335, 346, 389, 391, 392, 394-398, 400, 419
- Somaia (Ketan): 46
- Somalia: 140, 182, 437
- Somalis: 70, 122, 205, 314, 315, 410-412, 427, 429, 435, 438
- Somjee (Murtaza): 60
- Somjee (Sultan): 5
- Soni (goldsmiths; also see Pattni): 44, 54, 56, 80, 86, 207, 289, 290, 326, 365, 366
- Soroti: 162
- Soundararajan (M.): 50
- South Africa: 15, 19, 21, 24, 25, 42, 45, 46, 103, 119, 235, 247, 297
- Southern India: 313, 322
- Souza (Francesco de): 26
- Souza (Fitz de): 27, 65
- Spain: 25, 331, 332

- Sri Lanka: 34, 132, 169
- Sri Lankans: 149
- Srinagar: 102
- Staff recruitment: 53, **292-293**, 396-397, 401-402, 427, 431, 435
- Standard*: 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420
- Starehe: 136, 137, 139
- Stereotypes, prejudices and exclusion behaviour: 26, 62, 210, 335, 345-346, 371, 383, 391, 392, 393, **396-398**, 400-404, **409-421**
- Street boys: 425
- Sudan: 135, 137, 139, 140, 150, 182
- Sudanese: 176
- Sudra*: 33, 43, 82, 90, 93, 104, 208
- Switzerland: 232
- Sunar: see Soni
- Sunday Standard*: 420
- Sunnis: 32, 38, 46, 48, 54, 55, 56, 64, 68, 74, 80, 91, 92, **93-94**, 95, 102, 198, 205, 208, 215, 230, 241, 261-263, 286, 289, 290, 300, 314, 315, 322, 326, 333, 334, 347, 364, 366, 375, 393, 423-424, 433-435, 437-438, 439-440
- Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims: 92, 102, 221, 314
- Surat: 264, 267, 272
- Suriname: 328
- Sutar or Suthar (carpenters): 54, 56, 79, 86, 207, 290, 291, 326, 365, 366
- Syria: 18, 95, 223, 224, 225, 232, 267, 426
- Swahili (language): 36, 38, 58, 84, 102, 207, 230, 252, 272, 299, 312, 364, 365, 371, 382, 388, 389, 392, 395, 396, 398, 400, 426, 432, 436
- Swahilis: 16, 27, 64, 92-94, 205, 210, 314, 315, 362, **373-377**, 380, 382, 410, 427
- Swainson (Nicolas): 51, 78
- Swaminarayan: 17, 33, 61, 70, 79, 81, 82, 85, **87**, 201, 288, 347, 348, 350, 393
- Swastika*: 193
- Swetamber Derawasi: 88
- Swetamber Stanakwasi: 88
- Tabora: 113, 117, 127
- Tadjikistan: 223, 232, 233, 400
- Taibebdji (Rehana): 273, 276
- Tailors: 20, 54, 56, 86, 104, 105, 207, 289-291, 306, 309-310, 328, 396, 437

- Tailor (Rajni): 65
- Talika*: 227, 228, 239, 254
- Tamil: 203
- Tamil Nadu: 20, 104
- Tanga: 113, 117, 367
- Tanganyika: 19, 24, 97, 113-126, 362, 363, 374, 379-386, 397
- Tanganyika African National Union: see TANU
- Tanna (Sanjay): 65, 350
- Tanna (Suru): 47, 85
- Tanners: see Cobblers
- TANU: 384, 385, 386
- Tanzania: *passim*
- Taqiyya*: 223, 225, 255
- Tariqah*: 96
- Tariqah and Religious Education Board: 98, 234, 235, 242
- Tarkhan (carpenters): 54, 90
- Tax authorities, Taxes: 71, 72, 74, 89, 96, 132, 226, 231, 232, 238, 266, 267, 273, 274, 297, 333, 343, 345-346, 356-360, 375, 413, 417, 420
- Taxis: 49, 369
- Taylor (Rajni): 350
- Tayyibi Dawoodi or Tayyibites (also see Bohra): 98, 99, 259, 260, 315
- Tea: 48, 66, 101, 343, 443
- Telecommunications: 49, 101, 249, 443
- Telephony: 279
- Television: 38, 199, 252, 392
- Temples: 25, 37, 70, 82-84, 87, 103, 193, 287, 288, 301, 306, 308, 309, 310, 312, 317, 321, 363, 365, 367, 393, 429 and photos
- Temu (A.J.): 381, 406
- Textile (trade and industry): 45, 47, 54, 56, 88, 97, 250, 279, 281, 304, 311, 312, 329, 417, 420
- Thika: 133, 136, 281
- Thoban (Muhamood): 350
- Thuku (Harry): 23, 24
- Tinker (Hugh): 328, 354
- Tinware: see Metallurgy
- Tipp (Tippu): 376
- Tonga: 126
- Topan (Farouk): 245, 258
- Topan (Tharia): 376, 400
- Toronto: 335, 432

- Tororo: 162, 347, 350
- Tourism: 49, 71, 97, 170, 195, **250-251**, 269, 278, 312, 343, 369, 388, 417, 426, 443
- Tourism Promotion Service: 97, 229, 249-251, 256
- Towns or cities: 30, 38, 139-141, 162-163, 171-173
- Trade (large distribution): 49, 56, 269, 278, 311, 343, 366
- Trade (maritime): 17, 18, 25, 55, 56, 96, 290, 361, 374, 378, 432
- Trade (wholesale): 25, 49, 127, 157, 278, 279, 300, 331, 343, 351, 366, 368, 411, 418, 425, 430
- Trade (retailers; also see *dukawallah*): 31, 49, 55, 56, 70, 104, 127, 157, 168, 173, 229, 278, 279, 282, 295, **299-301**, 328, 329, 331, 334, 343, 351, 366, 368, 373, 374, 376, 380, 381, 383, 387, 391-392, 394, 396, 412, 416, 430, 431, **436-437**, **439-440**, 441, 444 and photos
- Trade in general: 55, 71, 96, 103, 117, 154, 157, 168, 221, 231, 278, 282, 290, 333, **343**, 369, 370, 378, 396, 413, **430-431**
- Trade Licensing Act: 27, 129, 131, 231
- Trade unionism: 26, 64
- Traders: 17, 18, 24, 27, 28, 31, 33, 55, 83, 85, 87, 88, 93, 100, 101, 127, 204, 213, 260, 263, 268, **277-301**, 306, 311, 315, 329, 331, 332, 361-365, 374-376, 378-382, 389, 396, 411, 418, 426, 427
- Trade Unionism: 26, 64
- Transporters: 86
- Transport (business): 49, 282
- Treaty: 16, 17, 373
- Trinidad: 328
- Tripolitan: 223
- Tripp (A.M.): 388, 407
- Turkey: 232
- Twaddle (Michael): 11, 407
- Tyres: 46, 101, 443
- Uganda: *passim*
- Uganda Islamic Revolutionary Party: 92
- Uganda Manufacturers Association: 45, 350
- Uganda Muslims Supreme Council: 92
- Ujamaa*: 387
- Unguja (Island): 118, 123, 374
- United Kingdom: see Great Britain
- United States: 58, 67, 73, 86-88, 95, 105, 166, 231, 232, 323, 363, 376, 388, 403, 432, 435, 443
- United Tanganyika Party: 385

- University(ies): 68, 73, 138, 139, 144, 169, 175, 211, 217, 236, 243-245, 247, 272, 283, 352, 399, 414, 424, 426, 442, 443
- Untouchables (*harijan*): 32, 34, 43, 82, 90, 92, 104, 270, 410
- Upanga: 394, 399, 400
- Urafiki Group: 405
- Urdu: 37, 62, 304, 315, 364, 368, 432
- Uttar Pradesh: 20
- Uzawa* ("Nativeness"): 389-393
- Vaishya*: 32-33, 43, 82, 85-86, 99, 158, 208, 310, 316, 326, 365
- Valmik: 204
- Van der Veer (Peter): 11
- Vancouver: 73, 335
- Vanza or Wanza: see Darji
- Varna*: 33-34, 43, 82, 158, 205, 207, 208
- Vassanji (M.J.): 392, 407
- Vastu Puja (worship): 288
- Veda: 95
- Vegetarianism: 38-39, 44, 87, 89, 100, 104, 202, 215, 218, 304, 410, 411, 426, 442
- Vernet (T.): 373, 407
- Victoria (Lake): 89, 126, 135, 140, 155, 172, 328, 425, 444
- Virjee (Suleiman): 24
- Visa Oshwal: see Oshwal
- Vishnu or Vishnor: 37, 87, 90, 95, 301
- Visram (Allidina): 97, 329, 330, 331, 332, 337, 380
- Voi: 23, 433
- Voluntarism: 239-241, 255, 314
- Wairire (Gidraph): 45
- Wakiso: 172
- Walji (Amin): 65
- Walji (Parveen): 298
- Wandegeya: 347
- Wanza or Wanza Darji: see Darji
- Warah (Rasnah): 27, 61, 65, 72, 78, 297, 298, 411, 414, 421
- Weaving industry: 90
- Weber (Max): 78, 96, 106, 318, 325
- Wedding: 214-216 and photos
- West Indies: 16, 67, 328, 409
- Westlands: 57, 59, 65, 135, 138, 139, 200, 281, 297

- Wholesale trade: 25, 49, 127, 157, 278, 279, 300, 331, 343, 351, 366, 368, 411, 418, 425, 430
- Widow(s): 42, 86, 104, 160, 172, 192, 194, 217, 218, 265, 310, 441
- Wilson (Harold): 363
- Women (status of): 42, 89, 93, **99-102**, **196**, **217-218**, 228, 229, 264, 265, 269, 293, 310, 312, 315, **368-369**, 438, 439
- Wood (industry): 55, 90, 279, 281, 433
- World Bank: 245, 247, 388
- Xenophobia: 15, 26-27, 56, 86, 129, 131, 154, 176, 336, **344-346**, 363, **383**, **386-387**, 391, 409, **412-421**
- Yemen, Yemenis: 98-100, 224, 247, 260, 261, 267
- Zahir* (lecture): 95, 261
- Zaire (Democratic Republic of Congo): 442
- Zakat* (legal alms): 96, 238, 266
- Zambia: 15, 24, 25, 28, 403, 443
- Zamindar: 48, 54, 55, 90, 204, 436
- Zanzibar: 15, 18, 19, 24, 27, 35, 64, 66, 71, 85, 87, 88, 94, 96-101, 103, 112-114, 118, 120, 123, 124, 126, 127, 195, 210, 226, 228, 230, 231, 245, 248, 251, 268, 328, 329, 361-363, 367, 372, **374-378**, 379-382, 384, 386, 387, 389, 399, 400, 413, 428, 432
- Zarwan (John): 53, 78
- Zimbabwe: 15, 24, 25
- Zulficar (Said): 258
- Zwanenberg (R.M.A.): 333, 354

Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania have minorities from the Indian sub-continent amongst their population. The East African Indians mostly reside in the main cities, particularly Nairobi, Dar es Salaam, Zanzibar, Mombasa, Kampala; they can also be found in smaller urban centres and in the remotest of rural townships. They play a leading social and economic role as they work in business, manufacturing and the service industry, and make up a large proportion of the liberal professions. They are divided into multiple socio-religious communities, but united in a mutual feeling of meta-cultural identity.

This book aims at painting a broad picture of the communities of Indian origin in East Africa, striving to include changes that have occurred since the end of the 1980s. The different contributions explore questions of race and citizenship, national loyalties and cosmopolitan identities, local attachment and transnational networks. Drawing upon anthropology, history, sociology and demography, *Indian Africa* depicts a multifaceted population and analyses how the past and the present shape their sense of belonging, their relations with others, their professional and political engagement. This book is a must-read for contemporary researchers, students, policy practitioners as well as the general reader.


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